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THREE WEEKS' NOTICE AND THE OLD ADDRESS AS WELL AS THE NEW ARE REQUIRED FOR CHANGE OF SUBSCRIBER'S ADDRESS.

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WHILE THE SUPREME COURT kept the country in a state of jitters over the TVA, President Roosevelt in a brief message asked Congress to carry out the logical consequences of the Hoosac decision and repeal the three remaining farm acts. The acts in question are the Bankhead Cotton Control Act, the Kerr-Smith Tobacco Act, and the Potato Act. All of them have presumably the same flaw of federal regulation and coercion that six of the justices found fatal in the AAA. Whether the President is being the good soldier or the clever strategist is hard to say, but there is a possibility that this latest move combines both. The President is drinking to the last dregs the hemlock cup presented by the Hoosac decision. But he is also thereby giving genuineness to the intentions of the Administration to make its new farm program constitutional. It is difficult to reconcile this sweet reasonableness on Mr. Roosevelt's part with Secretary Wallace's forthright condemnation of the Supreme Court's order in the rice millers' case to return the $200,000,000 of impounded processing taxes as "probably the greatest legalized steal in American history." Mr. Wallace's statement is the most courageous we have heard from a high Administration official since the President's radio message to Congress. Our only regret is that Mr. Roosevelt does not see his way clear to equal directness and courage.

ONCE MORE a strategic moment has appeared for the Administration to present a program of genuine social taxation. The invalidation of the AAA and the passage of the bonus have thrown the budget badly out of balance. Conservatives and liberals alike are troubled by the mounting national debt with its rapidly increasing interest burden. Speculators and monetary cranks are pleading for inflation as preferable to continuing to give the banks a "rake-off" on bonds. With the depression over as far as the security holders are concerned, the time has undoubtedly come to pay as we go. The net earnings of the first eighty-seven industrial companies to report for 1935 were 55 per cent higher than in 1934, and in one instance—the General Motors Corporation—profits were a thousand times greater than in 1932. Unless prompt action is taken to divert these sums from the pockets of those who cannot use them into socially desirable channels, we shall again confront the problem of a deficient consumer buying power and industrial stagnation. Last summer's tax bill was admirable as a political gesture, but grossly inadequate as a measure of social taxation. While the tax on the very wealthy was raised, the average well-to-do individual escaped practically scot-free. A comparatively small increase in the surtax on all incomes over $5,000 would provide more than enough to amortize the bonus and replace the processing taxes. Such action might alienate a few votes in election year, but it is our guess that those who oppose social taxation on principle are already bitter enemies of F. D. R.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S latest housing program, by which it definitely commits itself to the encouragement of privately financed housing at the expense of slum clearance, involves another disastrous retreat from the earlier principles of the New Deal. A few years ago housing was hailed as the field in which large public expenditures could yield the maximum social benefit with the least interference with private enterprise. An adequate housing program offers full scope for the employment of the country's idle men and idle dollars, and a remarkable opportunity for the stimulation of its most depressed industries. As Senator Wagner has pointed out, from a third to a half of America's thirty million families are now living in dwellings "that imperil their health and shock their sense of decency." Private enterprise has failed to meet the housing needs of the two-thirds of the population whose incomes are less than $1,500 annually, and must fail, as we pointed out editorially last week, unless it is willing to bring interest rates down to approximately 0.9 per cent. The Administration's es-

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timate that at most private capital will build 200,000 homes next year is a tacit admission of the inadequacy of the program, since approximately 500,000 new families are created yearly in excess of those which disintegrate through death or other causes, and replacement of 1 per cent of the existing houses would necessitate building 280,000 additional dwellings. A program designed to replace within a period of ten years all the unsatisfactory structures now in use would call for some 2,000,000 houses a year. Further evidence of the unrealistic approach of the FHA and other Administration agencies is seen in the decision to keep interest rates, for the present at least, at 6 per cent. Under these conditions such new houses as are constructed must—as previously—go to the few who can afford that luxury, not to the many who need them.

USING A TECHNIQUE similar to that practiced by Tammany chieftains in New York City, the politicians of Europe seized upon King George's death as an occasion for extensive diplomatic maneuvers. With the eyes of the leading statesmen of Europe upon him, the new King has been aware that anything beyond the merest formality in greeting foreign guests would be interpreted as an indication of future British foreign policy. Considerable importance, therefore, may be attached to the King's marked friendliness toward the Nazi representatives, Baron Constantin von Neurath and Dr. Leopold von Hösch. Informed Britishers take this to reveal not only a friendly feeling toward Germany, which Edward is long known to have had, but a marked sympathy with the German way of "solving" its political and economic problems. For the moment, however, the British government has apparently found these speculations embarrassing and has sought valiantly to counteract the political implications of the King's action. Sir John Simon broadcast a tribute to the late King over the wireless network of France, which was the only country to receive this special consideration. Although receiving representatives from all the powers, Captain Anthony Eden, Minister of Foreign Affairs, made a point of having three conversations with M. Litvinov. While the latter's indiscreet frankness concerning the intellectual qualifications of the King has undoubtedly chilled Anglo-Soviet cordiality for the moment, there is every indication that developments in the Far East are forcing the two countries into closer collaboration.

DESPITE EXISTING UNREST in the army, the death of Marshal Kondylis has probably saved Greece from a fascist dictatorship and paved the way for a return of Venizelos, who has been in exile since the failure of last spring's rebellion. On January 26, in the first election to be held since the restoration of the monarchy, the Venizelist party obtained a slight majority. Kondylis, whose coup d'état last October brought back King George, ran a close second and openly announced his intention of again overthrowing the government should Venizelos take office. He had particularly opposed the reinstatement of Venizelist officers in the army, within which he had built a powerful organization. Ex-Premier Tsaldaris, although also a reactionary, has been more favorably inclined to the Venizelists and has been reported as willing to join a coalition Cabinet under Venizelist leadership. Left as the sole leader of the opposition, he is now expected to shift to the right and support the military clique. The fact that Kondylis's fascist sympathies had led him to support Mussolini and to oppose the recently concluded British-Greek military understanding gave the bitter domestic struggle international importance. His sudden death brings to an end any hope that Il Duce may have held for an early break in the ranks of the sanctionist powers.

SWEDEN'S NEW BUDGET is a tribute to both the efficiency and the social-mindedness of its labor government. Although expenditures will exceed last year's by 5.4 per cent, there will be a surplus of twenty million kronor, which will be applied to a 12 per cent reduction in income taxes. The reduction in the normal tax will be of benefit primarily to the less well-to-do classes and is vigorously opposed by the large taxpayers, who have been clamoring for the elimination of the surtaxes levied on large incomes during the crisis. These are to be maintained and consolidated into a permanent system with an even sharper incidence of taxation. The increase in expenditures is to be devoted chiefly to social and cultural purposes, such as old-age and invalid pensions, loans to farmers and cottagers, public housing, and scholarships. There is, however, an increase of five million kronor in the appropriation for national defense. Perhaps the most unusual feature in the budget is the plan to amortize the whole of the short-term indebtedness incurred during the depression, a large part of which will be paid off by the end of the current budget year.

TACTLESSNESS, which in itself involves the absence of more fundamental wisdom, is the chief charge laid against President Robinson of the College of the City of New York by the alumni committee which has lately investigated the deep antagonism between the president and the students. Study of recent events at the college which have resulted in the expulsion of large numbers of students and considerable unpleasant newspaper publicity has revealed an unwieldy mass of regulations imposed by the administration, a belief on the part of President Robinson that radical activities at the college were engineered by an outside group bent on embarrassing him, and want of ordinary common sense in dealing with situations that began simply and ended in a burst of notoriety and hard feeling. The alumni committee of sixteen, headed by Dr. Henry Moskowitz of the class of '99, voted twelve to four that "the president lacks the human qualities necessary to achieve the widespread confidence of his faculty and his student body and to provide genuinely inspired, resourceful, and socially imaginative leadership." At a meeting of City College graduates on January 27 this opinion was upheld by a vote of 519 to 217, and the committee's report will be submitted to the city Board of Higher Education for action. Indicative of President Robinson's administrative methods is the fact that when he came before the alumni committee for questioning he brought with him twenty department heads, who, on being asked for their opinion about his official acts, politely upheld him at every point; indicative also is a petition signed so far by 112 of the 175 faculty members approving his conduct of office. This petition is being submitted to faculty members by their department heads. Refusal to sign it would obviously not be healthful for any teacher who wished to remain in good standing.

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YALE UNIVERSITY has been made the beneficiary of a bequest of $100,000 for scholarships from the late Charles Howard Warren, who accompanied the grant with the following explanation of his purpose: "Because I wish each award to serve . . . as a memorial to the Anglo-Saxon race, to which the United States owes its culture, I direct that the beneficiaries shall be confined to those boys . . . who shall be the sons of white Christian parents of Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian, or Teutonic descent, both of whom were citizens of the United States and were born in America." While this bequest can and doubtless will be defended by Yale on the ground that it does not discriminate *against,* but provides *for* a particular group, it is unfortunate that the donation should have been made at a time when any stirring up of racial prejudice is likely to have dangerous and far-reaching results. Any public institution, and especially a university with the prestige of Yale, should act with particular care to avoid lending the stamp of its approval to the doctrines of Nordic racial superiority that have been proclaimed by Nazi Germany and are even now being agitated for similar purposes in America. The recent action of President Conant of Harvard in refusing the somewhat similar scholarship bequest of Hitler's Hanfstängel pointed a way that Yale might well have followed. In particular one regrets that Yale, in accepting the grant, lays itself open to the charge of subscribing to the statement that the United States owes its culture to any single racial strain. Even though the university's trustees may agree, surely the faculties of history and anthropology know better.

HAVING TASTED BLOOD during the days of the NRA, a large portion of big business has united in an effort to obtain a Supreme Court decision permitting price-fixing, which is to say, an interpretation nullifying the force of the anti-trust laws. A test case, the outcome of which may rank in importance with the Northern Securities and Standard Oil decisions, has been pushed by the Sugar Institute, a trade association comprising the principal American refiners of imported raw sugar, who control between 70 and 80 per cent of all the refined sugar sold in the United States. The institute was found guilty of violating the anti-trust laws by the Circuit Court of Appeals in New York, and has appealed to the Supreme Court. Filing a brief as a "friend of the court," the Cotton Textile Institute, the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association, the Consumers' Goods Industries Committee, and the Window Glass Manufacturers' Association have asked that the Sugar Institute be upheld in its price-fixing, called "mass bargaining." The brief makes amusing reading for those who have been unable to believe that the present system can even limp along without conscious controls. Paying lip service to "the continuance of the fundamentals of competition," the brief admits that the NRA "recognized the need, which industry had long felt, for affirmative action to create affirmatively sound competitive conditions and practices." Such action by the government, however, was "regimentation," and there should be allowed in its stead "voluntary cooperative effort among the competitors in an industry." Furthermore, "it is not too much to say that the development of methods of securing reasonable stability and the elimination of destructive practices . . . must be effectively continued if the competitive system in its present form is to survive."

A VIOLATION of the federal labor law has been found against the management of Consumers' Research by the New York regional director of the National Labor Relations Board. The present decision, handed down on January 23 by Charles A. Wood, trial examiner of the board, will be referred to the national board for the initiation of appropriate court action. Consumers' Research is ordered to bargain collectively with the Technical, Editorial, and Office Assistants' Union, to reinstate three discharged employees with back pay from the time of their dismissal, and to reemploy in their former positions and at their former pay all workers who went on strike September 4 unless they have already been reemployed. Although the five-day period during which an answer may be filed has elapsed, no reply has been received from Mr. Schlink. The next steps are for the New York board to file notice in Washington of noncompliance, and for the national board to issue a cease-and-desist order. But Mr. Schlink, in his role of traditional labor-hating employer, has already denied the jurisdiction of the labor boards and the constitutionality of the Wagner labor law. The strike itself was called off on January 12, and forty workers about whose competence there has never been any question are put to the expedient of looking for jobs when jobs are scarce. These former workers announce that they are planning the establishment of a rival organization which will supply information "not only as to the quality of advertised commodities, but as to the labor conditions under which they are produced." We wish it all success.

TWO WARS are being fought on the American waterfront—a long battle line which extends from Vancouver, British Columbia, clear around the coast to New York City and beyond. It is a highly important line because whoever holds it holds the key to many an inland stronghold. The main quarrel is between organized labor and the shipowners. The second is a desperate struggle for control between old-line union leaders and the young aggressives among the rank and file, best typified in the name of Harry Bridges. In recent months occasional spurts of flame have indicated that the smoldering fires were growing more intense, but there has been little open fighting since the general strike in San Francisco in 1934. The internal union fight recently broke into the headlines when the International Seamen's Union of the Pacific revoked the charter of the Sailors' Union. The reasons given make it clear that the International is disciplining the Sailors' Union because it has become militant and effective. The special bone of contention is the Maritime Federation, which the bureaucracy hates because of its rank-and-file control and no doubt because it smells of industrial unionism. The Sailors' Union was ordered to withdraw from the federation, and its funds have already been tied up by the International. But the rank and file on the West Coast have won too much through the Maritime Federation to give it up without a fight; moreover, its prestige has run like lightning round the coast. At the Washington conference three sailors from New York spoke for unity. "We want democracy in the East," said they, "we want a maritime federation in the East and Gulf." They went on to say they wanted the same wages and working conditions that prevail on the West Coast. That is the meat of the argument; wages are $5 higher in Mr. Bridges's territory than they are outside.

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Picture of Confusion

AMONG the seats of the mighty Franklin D. Roosevelt has simultaneously occupied at least three with surprising and continuing success. The seat on the left has held Roosevelt the friend of labor, rememberer of the forgotten man, reformer and crusader. On the right has sat Roosevelt the lawyer and country squire, friend of legitimate business, primer of pumps, dispenser of breathing spells. And in the dead center, stabilizing the whole arrangement, has sat Roosevelt the politician, friend of everybody. So it was in the beginning; but recently events have conspired to upset the nice balance necessary to so broad a straddle. Mr. Roosevelt has had one chair jerked out from under him with unceremonious violence; the friend of business is a man without a seat.

The disbalance produced by the recent decisions of the Supreme Court on the one hand and the attacks of the allied reactionaries on the other is certain to produce confusion in all ranks. At this stage even old political hands refuse to prophesy the results to the present Administration of Mr. Smith's threatened walk, of Governor Talmadge's near-convention with its near-platform, of hints in various quarters of bi-party coalition. The very composition of the emerging alliance is fantastic, comprising such alien and disparate groups as the Ku Klux cohorts of the Georgia governor, Al Smith's mixed following of du Ponts, Catholic reactionaries, and disappointed Democrats, and the New York *Herald Tribune*. But uncertainty is inevitable in the early months of a campaign, and strange partnerships are common enough to be accepted without much question by a patient electorate. More dangerous are the confusions likely to result in regard to the position and purposes of Mr. Roosevelt.

In the months following the Congressional elections of 1934 the glamor of the New Deal slowly faded. Liberals and radicals, workers and farmers, ceased to expect administrative miracles. Labor learned that with or without a Magna Charta it had to fight for even the right to fight. Social security turned into a diminished hope long deferred. Public housing remained a dream and a blueprint. Many farmers were paid for what they failed to raise or sell, but the poorest among them received nothing but a dole and suffered more than at the depth of the depression. Millions of men and women were kept alive by rapidly shifting methods of relief, but their level of subsistence remained beneath the lowest standards set by the government statisticians. Eleven or twelve million workers were still without jobs. Wages and employment, it is true, made small gains, but not until profits had begun to soar.

As usual, disillusionment produced both clarity and cloudiness. Criticism of the New Deal began to crystallize in political forms as various as snowflakes. Most of them were grotesque and appealed to a discontent based only on desperation, but some represented a genuine growth in understanding of the sources of power. Especially in the lower ranks of labor were these signs of growth manifest. Among unionists militancy developed, a demand for new and more aggressive leadership, and an increasing unwillingness to take the promise for the performance in Washington. Talk of a "third" party emerged in groups hitherto politically insulated; in a few localities actual labor parties were formed; unions of relief workers, especially in the white-collar ranks, besieged the Administration with petitions and demonstrations and strikes; criticism of the New Deal swelled in volume and volubility, and the labor spokesmen of the Administration, from Frances Perkins to Donald Richberg to Leo Wolman, were written down as renegades. Much of the criticism was justified by the course of events; to this moment that course has not been altered.

But the attitude of labor has altered—with results that may prove important. Between them, the Supreme Court and Al Smith and the rest of the motley opposition have managed to reinvest the New Deal with glamor, to recreate illusion. Without moving an inch to the left Mr. Roosevelt suddenly finds himself again the champion of labor. It takes a tough and tempered radicalism to withstand the temptation of supporting a man who is attacked for being radical. When Smith assails Roosevelt for shoving through "socialist" measures in defiance of the Constitution, the average liberal is inclined to defend laws he knows well to be inadequate. When Talmadge sneers at the reckless waste of federal funds on projects of relief, even the unemployed begin to doubt that relief is as scanty as their stomachs assure them it is. Already signs of labor's softening have begun to appear. The most sensational evidence, of course, is the speech of John L. Lewis before the United Mine Workers' convention in Washington and the unanimous vote of the convention actively to support the reelection of the President by work and funds. It is true that Lewis and the miners, despite disappointments, have been continuously more friendly to the Administration than many unionists. But their action is almost unprecedented in labor history and cannot be interpreted as anything but a defiant answer to Roosevelt's enemies. This mood will doubtless spread as the emotions of the campaign grow more intense. Smith has handed Roosevelt the labor vote.

It would be pleasant to believe that pressure from the right will similarly incline the President toward labor and a more consistent policy of reform. But experience of political behavior in a campaign year counsels skepticism. Only one event might force the President to take a stand justifying the hopes of the workers and the abuse of the reactionaries. If the NRA and the AAA should be followed to the scrap heap by the other major measures of social control, Mr. Roosevelt might have to face the dreaded issue of constitutional change. But even then it is more likely that the President will move warily down the middle of the road that leads toward reelection. He will probably try to dodge the issue of the Constitution by proposing new laws contrived to survive the court if possible but in any case to tide over till election day. If labor and liberals in general will watch closely the actions of the Administration instead of listening to the vituperations of its opponents, they will save themselves much ultimate regret. Above all, they should decline to take Mr. Smith's word for Mr. Roosevelt's radicalism.

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Can We Be Neutral?

THE bitter attack on the Administration's neutrality bill by John Bassett Moore, former justice of the World Court and recognized as one of America's leading experts on international law, symbolizes a growing opposition to the proposed legislation. Washington observers report that the hearings in both the House and the Senate have been attended by indescribable confusion. Congressmen skilled in dealing with the petty problems of their constituents have been utterly baffled by the conflicting arguments on what is unquestionably one of the most complex and crucial issues of our time. They have found that it is one thing to analyze the forces which drew us into the World War, but quite another to chart the effect of a series of unprecedented regulations under all the circumstances which might possibly arise in future years. It is scarcely surprising, therefore, that a large part of the enthusiasm which existed for new neutrality legislation a few months ago should have evaporated under the heat of criticism.

Opposition to the Administration bill has come chiefly from two quarters. The diehard isolationists, such as Senator Johnson—and to a lesser extent Senator Borah—have been disturbed at the prospect of giving up America's traditional insistence on the freedom of the seas and by fear that the new legislation might prove to be a back door into the League. This group has been responsible for a series of amendments which, if incorporated into the final law, will largely destroy its effectiveness. The latest and most damaging of these is a provision, written in by the House committee, which in effect suspends the embargo on war materials pending the revision or termination of existing commercial treaties, an action which would preclude an embargo against oil shipments to Italy.

On the other hand, there has been a growing recognition among peace groups that certain aspects of the new neutrality bill are unsound in principle. Neutrality, if it is to mean anything, must involve compete impartiality. This not only means that we dare not be concerned regarding the fate of Jews in Germany, Catholics in Mexico, or American investments in Manchuria, but that we may not—as a people—pass judgment on the question of war itself. We must treat aggressor and aggrieved with complete equality. Such impartiality, or disinterestedness, might be possible for the residents of Samoa or even Argentina, but it is out of the question for Americans. As a leading creditor and as one of the chief commercial nations in the world, the United States is inextricably involved in world events. No great imperialist power, with commitments in all parts of the earth, can be truly neutral unless it voluntarily chooses to renounce its widespread interests.

A further grave weakness in the present bill, as contrasted with that proposed recently by the National Peace Conference, is to be found in the provision limiting embargoes on war materials to those amounts which are in excess of the "normal" peace-time trade. While in theory this protects American business against a loss of trade, it actually recreates all the problems faced by President Wilson in his unsuccessful attempt to maintain neutrality in 1917. If, for example, a war broke out between the League powers and Nazi Germany, there would be the same squabble about "freedom of the seas" and neutral "rights," and the same pressure to increase trade with the "Allies" in order to offset the loss of German markets.

Despite the shortcomings of the bill, however, some neutrality legislation should be enacted before the expiration of the present resolution on February 29. Although a law empowering the President to cooperate with the League in the prevention of war would be distinctly preferable to either the Pitman-McReynolds or the Nye-Clark proposals, the United States dare not risk a return to the old neutrality, with its insistence on American "rights." Fortunately, the Nye Investigating Committee has done its work well. The American people are not in a mood to allow the pressure of financial interests to involve us in another war. They will demand at least an embargo on loans and credits. There is no basic inconsistency in endeavoring to limit the war-breeding influence of our financial and business leaders while seeking to establish an international system of law. Such inconsistency as appears to exist grows out of the misuse of the word neutrality when applied to the proposed legislation. It is true that we cannot cooperate in the establishment of an effective organization for the enforcement of peace and at the same time maintain a strict "neutrality." We cannot and dare not evade our responsibility as a world power. And we can and must curb those interests within our boundaries which would lead us into war. Both objectives can be achieved by giving the President discretionary power to raise the embargo on shipments to countries attacked in violation of the Kellogg pact.

Relief, Today and Tomorrow

"BALANCE the budget" is the war cry with which the anti-Administration forces will advance against Mr. Roosevelt in the coming campaign. In the words of the mellifluous Governor Talmadge, "Shall we continue to borrow and spend, or settle down and settle up?" Without the Georgia Governor's fireworks, even Governor Landon, in a discussion of the unbalanced budget, declared that "relief appropriation has been more than ample," but that bureaucracy has taken more than its share of the amount that should have been spent on the unemployed.

In the light of these criticisms it is pertinent to inquire just how much the federal government is spending for relief, and how wide an area these appropriations are covering. Estimates of the number of unemployed in the country today vary from nine to seventeen million. The American Federation of Labor estimates 11,672,000 as of November, 1935. For the week ending January 4, 1936, there were approximately 3,550,000 persons on the federal work-relief pay roll. With the termination of the FERA approximately 1,500,000 unemployables were transferred from federal relief to state or local aid. Assuming that all of these persons are now obtaining some form of government assistance, we have a total of a little over 5,000,000 being cared for today by the state, leaving, according to the A. F. of L., about 6,500,000 unemployed for whom no such provision is being made.

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Last spring an appropriation of $4,800,000,000 was made for federal relief, the eight hundred million to be expended before the end of the fiscal year in June, 1935, the remainder to be used for relief in the current year. An article in the *Annalist* for January 24 estimates that something like a billion of this will be still unexpended on June 30 next. The annual expenditure for relief this year, therefore, will be almost the same as it was last, namely, three billion dollars. Assuming that every dollar of this sum is used for direct relief of the unemployed, it means an expenditure of $850 a year each for 3,500,000 people; each of these, however, represents a family unit of three and a half persons. What it amounts to is that the federal government supports 3,500,000 families at $850 a year each, or about half the subsistence-level income as it is generally estimated, and that the remaining 8,000,000 unemployed—also presumably representing families and not individuals—are dependent upon admittedly inadequate state or municipal relief, the casual benefits of private charity, or their own dwindling resources.

From this standpoint it is seen that although the federal government is spending enormous sums of money, it is hardly plunging the beneficiaries into luxury. Elsewhere in this issue Mr. Feinstein indicates what these expenditures mean when separated into geographical and personal units. At best, in the New England states, where the relief rate is highest, they mean enough to eat, of a sort, shelter, and fuel, with almost no allowance for clothing or household necessities. At worst, in the Southeastern states, where the average monthly relief grant per family is $17.50, they mean something less. Yet even this meager allotment is considered extravagant by the advocates of a balanced budget, and Mr. Roosevelt himself wishes to give the impression that some attempt will soon be made to scale down relief expenditures.

The *Annalist* article offers general criticism of the overcostly federal relief program, and suggests an alternative which may be taken as the program of many Administration critics. It is simply a return to the dole, as the least expensive way of meeting what is admittedly a problem of large-scale distress. This would have the additional advantage of eliminating government competition with private industry, so objectionable to Mr. Smith's Liberty Leaguers. It is perfectly true that as it is now administered the work-relief program of the government is not all that could be desired. There is undeniably a good deal of boondoggling and extravagant overcrowding at the top. But when useful work is economically performed, work relief is obviously preferable to the dole. In the January *Survey* the directors of thirteen national organizations discussed relief now and in the future. None of them could see an immediate prospect of smaller government expenditures. Most of them thought, with the inevitable decline of private resources attendant upon six years of depression, that this would be the "worst winter yet." Almost without exception they called for a federal program that was definite and consistent and that at the same time recognized relief as a more or less permanent problem. Even with the return of "recovery," estimates of probable unemployment range from six to eight million. These recommendations are made by persons in direct, daily contact with the suffering and insecurity that unemployment brings. Without adequate social-security legislation, based on increased taxation, proposals to "balance the budget" are bound to seem unrealistic and remote.

Mr. Rice Resigns

ON January 23 Elmer Rice, the well-known playwright, resigned as regional director for New York of the WPA Theater Project. Mr. Rice's resignation was accepted with obvious alacrity by Jacob Baker, national administrator of the WPA arts, but it is difficult to see how the incident can fail to be embarrassing to the Administration.

Mr. Rice, who says that he was promised an absolutely free hand and that partisan politics would not enter into the matter, charges the government with bad faith and a determination to exercise a censorship which it had agreed to withhold. Ostensibly the clash came over the first edition of the proposed "Living Newspaper," which dealt with the Ethiopian situation, but Mr. Rice insists that the issue raised here was merely a pretext. Baker and Hopkins, he says, were alarmed by the possible political consequences of two other proposed scripts, one dealing with relief, the other with the plight of the share-croppers, and were determined to force his resignation on a less clear-cut issue. Accordingly Mr. Baker, just before the production of "Ethiopia," issued an order forbidding the representation on the stage of any foreign ruler, minister, or Cabinet member, well knowing that "Ethiopia" could not be presented under the ruling and that Mr. Rice would be compelled to resign. Miss Hallie Flanagan, though sympathizing with Rice, feels that the whole project is too important as a relief measure to be dropped at the present moment and will remain as national director of the theatrical and musical projects of the WPA. Philip Barker has been appointed temporarily to fill Mr. Rice's place.

The situation raises a good many complicated questions. One of them concerns the extent to which it is advisable to attempt to combine relief and cultural objectives as they were combined in this project. Another and even more complicated one concerns the extent to which, either in theory or in practice, even a democratic government can be expected to give active aid to the spread of doctrine which it regards as dangerous to its existence or even to its program. On the one hand it may be argued that the doctrine of free speech is merely permissive, that it denies the right of any group to forbid the free expression of opinion without imposing an obligation on any such group actively to further opinions which it does not hold. On the other hand, if this is the attitude which the present Administration planned to take, it is hard to understand why it chose to appoint such a well-known and notoriously intransigent radical as Mr. Rice, or to give him every assurance that he would not be subject to censorship. The whole incident is certainly the result of a blunder if not of a crime.

Mr. Rice, who has been insistent in expressing his belief that the private theatrical enterprise is doomed by economic conditions to triviality, may well ponder again the question whether such enterprises do not, after all, permit a greater freedom of expression than, for the present at least, seems likely to be enjoyed by any governmental project in any country. He has declared himself "done with the commercial theater"; it will be too bad if he is now done with the state theater also.

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Issues and Men

The Morro Castle Convictions

THE conviction of two officers of the Morro Castle and an official of the Ward Line is of the utmost importance as bringing home to steamship men everywhere their responsibility to the traveling public. One may feel some sympathy for the acting captain who was saddled with the command of the ship by the sudden death of the captain a short while before the disaster occurred. But a really able seaman would not have headed his ship up into the wind and would have risen better to the emergency. The case of the vice-president of the line, Henry E. Cabaud, who was fined $5,000 in lieu of a prison sentence of a year, is more appealing, however, because the real responsibility for the ship's condition rested not with him but with the superintendent, who under the law could not be tried, and he was hardly guilty of having "knowingly and wilfully" connived at conditions which caused loss of life. As for the chief engineer, he was a miserable poltroon, and his four years in prison are merited even though his refusal to go to his post did not actually jeopardize the working of the ship. The $10,000 fine levied against the line was all that was possible under the statute. It should have been much more. Society has a duty to "encourage the others" in a case like this, all the more because the Ward Line had not borne too enviable a reputation—to put it politely—before the Morro Castle disaster occurred. As it is, this is the first conviction of ship's officers since the burning of the Slocum nearly thirty-six years ago.

The convictions must not, however, distract public attention from the remedial measures needed at once to protect the seagoing public. Congress has been inexcusably derelict in allowing itself to be prevented by the Seamen's Union from approving the treaty which would bring about our adherence to the International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea, already ratified by nearly all the other maritime nations. It should act at once, for this convention advances the protection of ships from fire dangers far beyond our own statutes, which are sorely in need of strengthening and amendment. The modern ship, with its needlessly luxurious fittings and lavish use of wood for purely decorative purposes, is nothing less than a fire-trap, as was shown when the Europa and the brand-new Bermuda burned at their piers, the former just prior to the date of her first sailing. Next, the Steamboat Inspection Service, which was proved guilty of negligence and venality at the time of the Slocum disaster, needs again to be overhauled, brought up to date, and freed from political interference and appointments. Perhaps the addition to the Board of Supervising Inspectors of that gallant and experienced officer, Captain George Fried, may lead to some improvement. The next constructive measure would be to bring all seamen under the workmen's compensation law—something strenuously resisted now by the Seamen's Union and its lawyers—and there should be compulsory insurance of all passengers. With this should be studied the whole difficult question of how to have adequately trained sailors to man the lifeboats when the modern seaman has degenerated into a paint-chipping handy man or mechanic.

Unquestionably conditions of life aboard ship are unsatisfactory despite great improvements in living quarters and food. Inadequate pay and uncertainty of employment—the latter especially in the stewards' department, where the personnel fluctuates with the seasons—do much to prevent the maintenance of a thoroughly efficient crew. The status of the officers is also bad. An experienced and able commander of merchant and naval ships who attended the official inquiry into the Morro Castle disaster could not conceal his amazement at the poor quality of that ship's officers, even those who were without blame. He declared that they not only could not speak their own language properly, but that they gave no evidence of having the personality or the efficiency or the habit of command essential to the successful officer, whether in the engine room or on the bridge. This is due chiefly to underpayment and the failure to make the career attractive to the right kind of men. Officers are often horribly overworked, and they are hampered in their own development as commanders and executives by the radio, which has made it possible for them to turn to the home office for instruction at all times, even in minor matters, with the result that they are less and less willing to assume responsibility. From this point of view the radio is almost a misfortune for navigators. When all is said and done, however, you cannot have good ship's officers unless you pay them well, give them a good social standing, and allow them sufficient leave on shore to have something of family life.

When you put these conditions up to the steamship managers they reply that they would like very much to do all these things, but where is the money to come from? To which the answer is that if they cannot manage a steamship line with efficiency and with safety for their passengers they ought not to be in the business. If that means government ownership and operation, then that must be faced. Unfortunately the history of navigation proves that even in the most prosperous times officers and men have been inadequately paid and often dreadfully maltreated, starved, and abused. Meanwhile the burden of command placed upon the captain of the ship steadily increases. As I have written before, some Cunard captains actually protested to their home office against the building of the Queen Mary on the ground that no individual should be saddled with a greater responsibility than that of the captains of the then existing ships. They are the heads of communities that in the case of the Queen Mary will number 3,600 persons. In addition, they must be skilled navigators equal to any emergency of the sea and hosts and rulers of their share of the traveling public.

Oswald Garrison Villard

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What I Saw in Germany

By LOUIS FISCHER

Berlin, January 6

I ARRIVED in Berlin almost fourteen years to a day after I had first seen it in December, 1921. I have been in Germany every year since 1921, sometimes for several months at a stretch, sometimes for several weeks. I have never known it so pessimistic, not even in the worst period of currency inflation, when the suffering was greater. Germans of all classes fight for their pessimism, insist it is justified, and maintain that an optimism achieved by an effort of will would vanish at the slightest touch of today's reality. They are resigned to a long siege of gloom. No improvement is expected. The official press, with welcome honesty, feeds this humor. "The government and the nation," Joseph Goebbels, Minister of Propaganda, announced in a New Year broadcast, "had their troubles last year and will have them in the future too." He spoke of "scarcity, inconveniences, and sacrifices." "Sacrifices on the altar of Mars," was the comment of several Germans with whom I listened to this talented coworker of Adolf Hitler. At the table of every German family sits an invisible but voracious eater who grabs the butter, the meat, the eggs, before anyone else can reach them. He wears a steel helmet and his mouth is the maw of a cannon.

Many German citizens—good Aryans, of course, for the others lost their citizenship at Nürnberg and are men without a country in their native land—complain about the same things in almost the same language. This in itself is significant. "We were promised national elections every year," they say. "Why did no elections take place in 1935?" Intellectuals, government employees, and workingmen pose this question. They have an answer: "The regime probably fears the result." This implies that the Nazis know the mood of the population. They would have to be blind and deaf not to know it, for not since Herr Hitler came into office three years ago has there been such widespread vocal opposition.

I walked into a big bookstore in the fashionable west end of Berlin and asked for political literature. The salesman proposed *Die Neue Rundschau*. I said I had been a regular reader of the old *Rundschau* and had found it stimulating, but that this new editor and his contributors went on for pages and pages without uttering a single sensible word, without offering a single thought. "That is their function," the salesman replied. Then he suggested a pamphlet entitled "Bodentreuer Adel" about the nobility's love of and loyalty to the soil and added, "This publishing house is as hostile to the regime as one dare to be nowadays."

Quite a number of Berlin streets have been rechristened in recent years. The Church of Matthew Street, for instance, has been named for the flag. Even the old-timer whose memory is better than his sense of direction errs a bit. I asked a vendor of inflated rubber balloons where such-and-such a street was. "God knows," he answered, "they change everything." His tone encouraged me to engage him in conversation. He had been a workingman in Wedding, "red Wedding," as this proletarian quarter of Berlin was once called. Two years of unemployment had forced him to move into the country. Because he was a peddler he was not entitled to the dole or to a job, "but jobs don't come to men of my age." He was forty-six. People of his generation could do nothing except "close their eyes," die. "Things can only get worse." He hoped for nothing. His son could only hope to go to war. Last week he had been in prison for four days. "I was grumbling about the butter shortage to some neighbors. A Hitler Youth girl of sixteen heard me. Fortunately, my documents were in order, so they released me." "That means," I probed, "that you were never a Communist or Social Democrat." "Ach," he said, "what is in the heart need not be written on the paper or on the face." I stood and talked to him for about fifteen minutes. He greeted persons who approached to inquire about the price of a balloon with a snappy "Heil Hitler." In his lapel buttonhole he wore a *Hakenkreuz*.

An old friend who lives in the workers' district of Neukölln informed me about the mood of the workingmen. They had always been suspicious of the Hitler regime, yet when it brought some of them employment they became reconciled though sullen. Now unemployment had increased. The charity of the Winter Aid was insufficient, insulting, and precarious. The fat shortage was not only trying in itself, but indicated that the government was facing serious difficulties. "If it imports butter, lard, and meat it will import fewer raw materials and then there will be less work. If it imports raw materials we shall have no fats. For weeks before Christmas there was practically no fat, and the workers went to their factories with dry sausage sandwiches for lunch. Sausage is of poor quality and expensive. The workers are bitter." He told me this story. Several weeks ago a poster appeared in Neukölln which read, "The German Communist Party is still alive." Nazis then wrote on the signboard below: "Come to such-and-such a hall on Friday night for a frank discussion. We guarantee your unhindered departure." The next morning Communists had scrawled their answer. "It won't work," they wrote. "We are on S. A. duty." Many radicals have entered the S. A. and other Fascist organizations for protection rather than from conviction. Subsequently a foreign diplomat told me of the same Neukölln incident. He also related this anecdote, which is making the rounds of Berlin salons and cafes. General Hermann Göring, who enjoys the reputation of a "liberal" among Fascists, was visiting a factory. He gathered the workers about him and wanted to have a heart-to-heart talk with them. He asked them to speak openly. "I promise that nothing will happen to you if you do." Then he asked about their political beliefs. "Tell me where you stand," he said turning to a gray-haired foreman. "I have been a Communist for many years," was the reply. "And are you still a Communist?" "Yes." "And are there many Communists in this plant?" Göring pressed. "Oh, only about 30 per cent of the force." "What are the rest?" "Well, approximately 50 per cent of the total are Social Democrats," someone volunteered. "And the remaining 20 per

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cent?" Göring asked hopefully. "They are Christian Socialists." "Then where are the National Socialists [Nazis]?" Göring inquired perplexed. "We are all National Socialists," several men smilingly assured him. This sort of protective coloration to ward off "protective custody" or worse is very widespread and complicates the task of the Hitlerites; they cannot count their real supporters.

A German woman of Christian faith explained to me that she had recently taken her daughter out of the state school and put her into a Catholic school. Her daughter was fifteen. In her old class she was always being informed that she "would soon be a National Socialist mother" and had to "know her duty to the nation." Boys of thirteen and fourteen were regular readers of the anti-Semitic *Stürmer,* which specializes in the minutest pornographic details of "race violation" of Aryan women by Jews. Because of this atmosphere and for other reasons many parents were transferring their children to Catholic parochial schools. In one such institution—crowded now—forty Jewish boys and girls had been enrolled and were receiving favored treatment; a class in Hebrew had been opened for them. Decent Germans abhor the official policy toward Jews. "The Jews cannot be as bad as Goebbels and Rosenberg paint them." Nazi boys, on their own initiative, sometimes escort Jewish children home from school to guard them against harm.

In a Berlin autobus I notice empty seats, yet men are standing up. They are Jews. If they sit down an Aryan woman or man may indicate objection by a move or a grimace. It is this constant humiliation which oppresses German Jews almost as much as their utterly hopeless economic and political position. They must always be on their best behavior, and are kept away from many places less by actual prohibition than by the fear of being snubbed or insulted or forced to act against their conscience. While I was having a meal at Kempinski's a Brown Shirt came in with a tin box to make a collection. What Jew would want to contribute and what Jew would refuse to do so? In that restaurant, incidentally, I ordered chocolate ice cream. It had a bad taste. I called the waiter and said, "A rotten egg must have gone into this ice cream." He protested that there could be no rotten egg in it because there were no eggs at all in it. They used egg-substitute—this in one of the best Berlin eating houses. A salesgirl in a big store on the Leipziger Strasse looked at me pityingly when I asked, "Is this pure wool?" and said, "Nothing in Germany is pure wool now. At least 10 per cent of cotton and artificial wool is admixed. But our strict instructions are to call it pure wool."

Everywhere among Germans I discovered an eagerness to do their bit against the regime by saying something unfavorable about it. On January 1, I was lunching in the expensive Hotel Bristol on Unter den Linden. "Well," I said to the waiter, "how was business at yesterday's celebration?" "Fine," he said. "Probably worse than last year, however," I suggested. "No, rather better," he said. "I suppose there were many foreigners," I volunteered. "Ah," he replied, "very few foreigners could afford the price. Some of the guests were industrialists. But the vast majority were party functionaries." Numerous stories circulate about the rich villas, rich automobiles, and luxurious living of National Socialist officials. Such people as Göring, Goebbels, Ley, Darre, Rosenberg are the butt of endless jokes and jibes. Indeed, from the point of view of the regime, the worst feature of the public's attitude is that it laughs at the Nazis. Only Hitler is respected. The others, big and small, have no moral authority. Intellectuals especially resent the disrepute into which the government has brought their country and German culture abroad. "The Nazis," one liberal author who lives unmolested under a Hitlerian camouflage said to me, "aver that they are the bulwark of European civilization against bolshevism. I cannot believe that any foreigner takes this claim seriously. Civilization should begin at home." There is a lot of bitterness about the deterioration of art and culture. Numerous Germans boycott the theaters and cinemas, and judging by the one film I saw, entitled "Henker, Frauen, und Soldaten," I cannot blame them. Only the opera is excepted. Göring captured the two Berlin operas and has managed to keep them out of Goebbels's hands. He pays good salaries to the best artists and has retained the Jews. Blech, the Jewish conductor at the Prussian State Opera, is demonstratively cheered whenever he appears. This sort of "National Socialist competition" is quite common: Göring against Goebbels; Hanfstängel talking openly against Goebbels; the black-uniformed S. S. disgusted with Alfred Rosenberg. In his New Year message to the Reichswehr Hitler spoke neither of National Socialism nor of the revolution nor of the party. In greetings on the same occasion General Blomberg, Reichswehr Minister, mentioned Hitler but no other word that would recall the existence of the regime, while General Fritsch, the commander-in-chief of the army, and Admiral Räder, the commander-in-chief of the navy, mentioned neither Hitler nor National Socialism. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to think that political changes will originate with the armed forces. German Fascism has done a great deal for them; they expect it to do more.

I sat in a packed cafe with a prominent member of the staff of a Berlin daily. His business is to write pro-Nazi editorials, but his sentiments were decidedly anti-Nazi when he talked with me. He told me how the circulation of most German dailies, including his own, had fallen off sharply. The exceptions were the *Völkische Beobachter,* which was compulsory reading for the party, and the *Frankfurter Zeitung,* which was still allowed some freedom of judgment in order that at least one German newspaper might find some credence abroad. He gave me all the gossip about the regime, and then passed to anecdotes. I reproduce one. A Dutch boy was standing on the Dutch frontier and a German boy on the German frontier. "Ech," said the Dutch boy, "we have butter." "Yes," countered the German boy, "but we have the *Führer,* Hitler." "Huh," replied the Dutch boy, "we have butter and we have the Kaiser. Soon we shall also have the *Führer.*" This imaginary Dutch boy is too sanguine.

For a whole long evening German intellectuals regaled me with stories about general conditions and about their own lives. They discussed the hostility to Fascism among the workers, among government officials, in the S. A., and among the farmers, who object to Nazi legislation and to price control and other restrictive measures. "Then what section of the population does support this regime?" I demanded. "Not one." They were unanimous in this opinion. In three years, they testified, National Socialism, once the movement of millions, has lost its popular backing; hence the failure

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to call elections. Its only really convinced followers are the armed and well-disciplined S. S., the Nazis' praetorian guard —and fine-looking, strong fellows they are.

But intellectuals, workers, and everybody else I met emitted their anti-Fascist poison and immediately added: "Don't think anything will happen. The regime is stable. It has the guns and the concentration camps behind it." I asked all my acquaintances whether they saw illegal Communist or Socialist literature. They did not. One man who works in a big publishing house said, "We are ready for it but none ever comes our way." It is obvious that the Marxist movement, heroic and indefatigably optimistic though it be, is too limited to organize and direct an opposition which is so nation-wide. All people agree that hostility to Nazism unites the opposition but, as yet, nothing else does. One hears that the monarchists feel encouraged by developments in Germany and Greece and by the sympathy of certain Reichswehr elements. Their candidate for the throne is Prince Louis Ferdinand, grandson of the Kaiser, whom I met. Once he worked at the Ford plant in Detroit and now he is employed by the Lufthansa. He is a nice chap. It is hard to imagine, however, that he will some day rule Germany. If there were free public discussion or assembly the other groups might temporarily find a common language. But the eye of the Gestapo is sharp and its punishment fierce. The hostility to National Socialism, consequently, is ubiquitous and impotent. The strength of the regime lies in its enemy's disunion, in its own large armed forces, and in the strong, almost mystic hold which Hitler still has over many Germans. The weakness of the regime is explained by the fact that it has redeemed only two of its pre-1933 pledges: it is exterminating the Jews and it is forging a vast military machine which, in the opinion of Germans, enhances the danger of a world war.

Scottsboro Interview

By CARLETON BEALS

IN the Negro ward on the fourth floor of the Hillman Hospital on Sunday afternoon I saw Ozie Powell, the Scottsboro boy who was shot in the head by Deputy Sheriff J. Street Sandlin in the mysterious scuffle on the road between Decatur and Birmingham. Ozie lies in the first room after one steps from the white ward into the ill-kept black quarters. At his doorway are stationed highway patrolmen, sheriffs, and gum-shoe men, who survey all comers with suspicious eyes. Ozie was lying on his left side asleep, a white bandage on his head, his right foot chained to the bed.

I was speaking to the nurse when a lanky sheriff poked me in the chest with a hard finger and snapped, "Who are you?"

I explained, and almost at once he became loquacious. "I'd give a fifty-dollar bill," he repeated several times, "if you could talk to that nigger. But it's against the Governor's orders. I'd like you to see for yourself that that New Yawk lawyer Leibowitz is a damn' liar. Why, we had a man planted outside Ozie's window when he and Watts wuz talkin' to the nigger, and we know everything that was said."

"What do you think of these niggers?" asked a fat gum-shoe man. "They're guilty, ain't they? You'd shoot a nigger that knifed your buddy, wouldn't you?"

I managed to convince him that I thought as any good Alabaman does, and the sheriff grew mellow with the idea that at last he had found a friendly New York newspaperman. "Stand right here in the doorway," he said, "and have a look at him."

Before I could protest, he strode over to the bed, woke up the boy who had undergone a serious brain operation less than forty-eight hours before and whose life was still in the balance, and began firing questions at him. There was fear in the spasmodic twitching of the Negro's body and his rolling dazed eyes; he answered respectfully in a weak voice. Even so, he refused to incriminate Roy Wright, one of the other two manacled Negro boys in the car where the trouble started. When the sheriff insisted on an answer, saying, "That Leroy Wright's a bad fellow, isn't he? He put you up to this, didn't he?" Ozie groaned out, "Naw, he didn't have to put me up to it."

Similarly Ozie refused to answer the question, repeated again and again, "Leibowitz was mad at you, wasn't he?" This in a triumphant tone.

"Naw, he wasn't mad," the Negro boy managed to groan.

"But he was different toward you, wasn't he?"

"Naw, I guess—" And Ozie's voice drifted into unintelligibility.

"He didn't talk to you very long, did he?" persisted the sheriff.

"Guess—he didn't have much time."

"He was in a hurry, wasn't he?"

Merely a negative sort of groan answered this question. The Negro boy was perfectly lucid, but he seemed to grow weaker from the prolonged questioning, of which only a sample is given here.

The sheriff, with several others who had crowded into the Negro's room, came back to me with a gloating expression. "Now you can tell the truth about this, cain't you? You seen for yourself that Leibowitz was lying when he said this nigger wasn't in a fit condition to be questioned. You seen that he knows everything he's saying."

This scuffle on the road (following prolonged efforts by the sheriffs, and what appears to be collusion between the prosecution and the court, to force the boys to throw over their lawyers and accept a court-appointed lawyer on the promise that they would get off with lighter sentences) is merely an incident that further obscures the guilt or innocence of the defendants and further conceals the grave social and racial implications of the whole case.

These nine Negroes, ranging from thirteen to nineteen at the time of their arrest, have varied intelligence and character. Some were illiterate, although all of them can now

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read and write. All the young folk, black and white, taken off that fatal train at Paint Rock, Alabama, five years ago, were driftwood. One of the seventeen-year-old Negro boys had both syphilis and gonorrhea and was barely able to get about with a cane. Haywood Patterson, who received a sentence of seventy-five years in his fourth trial, was apparently chosen by the prosecution to be tried first because he has the blackest skin, the wickedest gleam in his eyes, and the meanest expression on his face. He is what is known in the South as "a bad nigger." This means that he is wilful, self-assertive, independent, not properly servile. Add five years of jail, and it would not be surprising if he had become hard and perhaps treacherous. Yet he is decidedly likable and, in contrast to Victoria Price, he has a straightforward honesty in his manner; he is more gentle and restrained than his accuser, who viciously spits out her words, some of them foul. He was generous enough to save Orville Gilley from death under the wheels by hauling him back by his feet into the "chert," or gravel car, although the white boy had trampled on his hands and almost caused him to fall off the moving train and had been heaving "stud," or rocks, at him. Haywood writes good English in a beautiful hand.

Ozie Powell, who was shot in the brain, was sullen and shifty on the stand and sometimes flared up with anger. Five years in a jail cell, with no proper exercise, no sunlight, and no amusements, have given him an acute prison psychosis. One of his fellow-prisoners says he has been "queer" for nearly a year. "He jus' sits off all by himself and plays that little harp of his and after a while throws a fit. He jumps up and curses everybody and everything. Theah's something the matter with his haid."

Willie Robertson, the sick boy, has at least improved in health during his jail experience. As one Southerner described him, "He is so dumb he tells the truth." When he first appeared on the stand he had a wild mop of kinky half-combed hair that split into tufts in the back. Now he is well dressed and slicks his hair with anti-kink grease, as do most of the others. Strangely enough, this seems to irritate the good people of Morgan County even more than the crime the Negroes supposedly committed; it is a constant topic of bitter conversation how well the boys are now dressed; and they are ridiculed for taking pains with their appearance. The fact is that they are better mannered and better dressed than most of the spectators at their trials.

Olen Montgomery, the nearly blind boy, who was hoping to get free treatment from an eye specialist in Memphis when he was taken off a box-car far removed from the part of the train where the supposed rape occurred, seems an honest, simple boy. He is "funny." One likes him at once.

The two Wright boys are both very bright. The youngest, only thirteen when arrested, has since been jabbed in the face with a bayonet by a state militiaman who was supposed to protect him; his cheek is drawn into an artificial perpetual grin. The older, Roy Wright, is a fine type of Negro with a good mind and open, good-natured countenance. Because he is the most intelligent of the lot, he is the one most fiercely hated by his guards.

At the recent trial, watching the half-illiterate talesmen shuffle forward in response to Judge Callahan's sharp calling of their names, surveying their shabby clothes, their dull eyes, their vacant countenances, their malformed bodies, and seeing them fill the spittoons with tobacco juice, one felt a sense of shame. These are of our purest American stock. What has brought about their degeneracy?

As one rides through the countryside and sees the shacks in which they live, the boards warped and rotting, the windows broken and stuffed with rags, as one looks at the stony hillsides and the pine trees standing in swampy pools, one realizes that many of these people in America in the twentieth century live worse than most peasants in the Balkans and certainly have fewer cultural attainments. They fear the Negroes. It is an economic fear. It is a physical fear. It is a cultural fear. It is a blind fear.

I have no space to summarize the evidence. Certainly in the recent trial there was not sufficient evidence to warrant a conviction. There was, in addition, a constant effort to obscure the defense testimony and to rule it out through tricky but legal procedure. The most vital evidence for the defense was barred. The prosecution could not call Ruby Bates, who has recanted her previous testimony and has declared the boys innocent. It could not call Orville Gilley, presumably an eyewitness, though it had him there under guard, for Gilley is now serving time in the Tennessee penitentiary for knocking down two women on separate occasions and stealing their purses. The prosecution, since the Horton trial, has not dared call Dr. R. R. Bridges, the official doctor who examined Victoria an hour and a half after the alleged rape, because in the first place his testimony contradicts Victoria's and in the second place, by not calling him, it prevents the defense from bringing in rebuttal testimony that would knock the prosecution's case into a cocked hat in any fair court in the land.

In one of the earlier trials a state's attorney, in his summation to the jury, waved Victoria Price's cotton drawers over his head and shouted a defense of Alabama's "pure womanhood." No other garments were offered by the state. Dr. Bridges had testified that there were no stains on the girls' clothing. At the recent trial the drawers were again waved in the courtroom, but this time they had become silk. Before the defense could make a protest, Judge Callahan testily ruled that they were inadmissible as evidence. But they had already had their effect on the jurors.

This is typical of the farce of the trial. Technically everything may have been perfectly legal. The record may read fairly, for all I know. But no one who was not present can realize the inflections of the court and the subtly changed meanings that were put upon words. In charging the jury Judge Callahan said that if such and such things were true, in a tone implying they probably were, then the defendant was a "rapist" and should be convicted. As he said these words, he glared over at the defendant in fury, his lips drew back in a snarl, and he rolled out the word "r-r-rapist" in a horrendous tone. The record will never show such things; but continue them hour after hour and day after day in an already prejudiced courtroom, and the sum total weighs upon the minds of the jurors.

Next Week

Colonel Frank Knox as a Presidential Candidate

By Raymond Gram Swing

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Loose Construction

By HEYWOOD BROUN

I HAVE been wondering whether the Republican National Committee would consider outside manuscripts for its famous radio program, "Liberty at the Crossroads." By now, I suppose, everybody is interested in the two characters, John and Mary, who have been created under the auspices of Chairman Fletcher. Undoubtedly you remember that in an early instalment of the series John and Mary were about to get married and were frightened off by a short talk on governmental extravagance and the mounting burden of taxation. John and Mary believe that all budgets should be balanced, and when last I heard of them they remained unwed out of deference to the sound doctrines of the Republican Party.

My sketch is based on the conception that somehow or other love finds a way as it did in the case of Romeo and Juliet, who hurdled certain political obstacles, although I must admit that the issues which stood in their way were municipal rather than national. At any rate, my radio sketch is founded on the assumption that John and Mary have a three-year-old boy known to them as Junior. They are living in a suburban cottage which is only partially paid for.

The background for my little drama must be explained by the announcer before the play proper begins. It has been snowing all night. In fact, it has been snowing for weeks. Nothing can stop it. The Democrats are still in power. A huge weight has piled up on the roof of the little villa. Our five-minute tragedy opens with a flock of studio sound effects. There is the sound of shrieks and outcries and of crashing timbers. Under the weight of snow the roof of John and Mary's house has caved in. Fortunately they have noted the preliminary rumbles and have had time to flee to the front lawn, now deep in drifts. But during the excitement both forgot Junior.

MARY: Junior is trapped!

JOHN: You mean?

MARY: I mean what I say. Somewhere under that pile of wreckage lies Junior in his crib, provided he has not been hit by some falling plank.

JOHN: This is awful.

MARY: You may well say it is awful, and, indeed, everything has been awful since America repudiated the Republican Party on account of a worldwide depression which Herbert Hoover was just about to turn to our own advantage when the partisan and subversive activities of the Democratic Party prevented him.

JOHN: You mean that by tinkering with the tariff the Democrats allowed the products of cheap coolie labor in foreign fields to flood our markets and destroy the best efforts of business men to maintain a wage scale adequate to continue the American standard of living for the workingman.

MARY: I mean that and also more. The Founding Fathers wisely laid down a way of life under which certain powers were granted to the federal government and others reserved to the states. All this was set forth at some length by that great Republican statesman Thomas Jefferson and his logical successors, Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover, not forgetting Alf M. Landon of Kansas, who has rigorously balanced the budget of his native state each year.

JOHN: And Junior is lying somewhere under the wreckage.

MARY: It is a wreckage wrought by various under secretaries and visionaries whose names can scarcely be pronounced, like Wallace, Frank, and Henry Hopkins.

JOHN: But how about a wrecking crew? Couldn't I call up on the telephone, the administration of which is a tribute to the initiative of private capital, and get some men with a derrick and possibly shovels to dig our little Junior out?

MARY: John, I am surprised and shocked to hear you utter such a thing in a land where we must choose between Washington and Moscow.

JOHN: Mary, I do not understand the nature of your Republican rebuke.

MARY: Have you so soon forgotten the bitter day we left the marriage-license bureau sweethearts in name only because we realized that we could not possibly balance the budget?

JOHN: I do remember.

MARY: You do well to remember because we founded our life upon the agreement that each day before we said our prayers we would get together in holy and sweet conference and balance our own budget before sleep and Tugwellian darkness had overcome us.

JOHN: "Pay as you go," was what we said.

MARY: And should we abandon that principle now under the slim excuse of an emergency? Derricks for Junior and steam shovels would set our financial plan awry and be but the first step in boondoggling extravagance.

JOHN: You bring me back to my better senses. I'm glad I married a girl from the sidewalks of New York, where the gate of opportunity is kept forever opening. There is always room at the top, and until I get there by honest effort in the good old American way, Junior can remain at the bottom of the wreckage.

MARY: Let us give proof through the night that our budget is still there.

JOHN: Yes, we must choose between the "Star Spangled Banner" and the "Internationale."

MARY: Between the "Volga Boatman" and "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee."

JOHN: Between Thousand Island and Russian dressing.

MARY: Between caviar and the general-welfare clause.

JOHN: Between the Founding Fathers or further foundering.

This could go on forever, but John and Mary and everybody but Junior are rescued by the studio orchestra, which breaks in with a medley of popular selections including "Columbia the Gem of the Ocean," "Du Pont, Can You Spare a Dime?" and "Walking Down Park Avenue."

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Washington Weekly

By PAUL W. WARD

Washington, February 2

ALMOST any day now the Supreme Court will hand down another anti-New Deal decision. Whereupon the Administration's apologists, still dodging the issue of constitutional reform, will again blame the New Deal's fate not upon the Constitution but upon the prejudices of the men appointed to construe the sacred document. Mr. Roosevelt will be pictured as the victim not of a system but of a group of reactionary old men. Mistaking the kernel of truth in this for the whole nut, leaf, branch, and tree, liberals will extend instant sympathy, and to that extent the fundamental issue will be further obscured.

All of which makes it pertinent to note at this time that sympathy of the kind mentioned is little deserved by the Roosevelt Administration. It has brought more than a few enlightened men into the federal service, but if it has assigned any of them to the federal bench, the fact has escaped notice. The truth seems to be that in this field more than in any other Roosevelt's appointments have been guided by purely political considerations. In consequence, the men he has elevated to the federal bench or promoted from the trial courts to the appellate courts have been no whit different in their general character from the men who received similar honors from Hoover, Coolidge, and Harding.

Nor has the recent piling up of anti-New Deal injunctions in the courts brought any noticeable change in the character of these appointments. Instead, they grow increasingly political. Candidates for the judiciary are being asked with no attempt at delicacy whether, if appointed, they will contribute a certain percentage of their first year's salary to the Democratic campaign coffers. In at least two recent instances they also have been asked by the President's official agents whether they will "go along" with the Administration in the handling of cases.

That attitude toward the lower courts is also the Administration's attitude toward the Supreme Court. It needs only a brief survey of the available evidence to convince any objective observer that, if given leave, Mr. Roosevelt would appoint to the Supreme Court men less interested in the public welfare than in putting the stamp of their approval on any measure the New Deal might pass up to them. Before you jump to the conclusion that this would not be so undesirable a situation as I hint, let me point out that it is precisely on a par with the court situation in Germany and Italy.

* * *

THE close parallel between New Deal and Old Deal tastes in judicial appointments has just been brought into sharp focus by an obscene brawl between Senators Bilbo and Harrison of Mississippi over President Roosevelt's selection of Judge Edwin R. Holmes for promotion to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. The essential details of that squabble have been reported fully in the daily press. It is mentioned here only because of one detail the daily press overlooked, an incident which illuminates both the status of civilization in Mississippi and the character of one of its favorite sons, Senator "What-a-Man" Bilbo.

The Senate judiciary subcommittee considering the nomination of Judge Holmes had evidence laid before it indicating that Bilbo, who is fond of quoting Scripture, apparently does not count among his favorite passages Deuteronomy 25:4, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn." For the committee was told that Senator Bilbo actually puts muzzles on Negroes who work for him. Reporting a conversation he had had some years ago with Bilbo when the present Senator was serving a jail term for contempt of court, Judge Holmes said: "He [Bilbo] was very interesting, giving me an account of his pecan orchard; how the pecans are gathered in the fall by little Negroes, how he had to muzzle them while they were at work and search them after they had finished, as they would eat a pound a day and carry off another in their pockets when they left; and pecans at that time were worth nearly a dollar a pound."

The narrative evoked no word of comment from the committee members. Nor did it elicit any attempt at refutation from Bilbo. All sides seemed to take the situation described for granted, including the man Roosevelt thinks deserving of an appointment to the Appellate Court. The committee was assured by other witnesses that Judge Holmes was noted for his impartiality, for his determination to deal equally with rich and poor, black and white.

* * *

THIS talk of muzzles reminds one that the past few days have produced evidence that at least two federal agencies—the Interior and Labor departments—apparently give no heed to Roosevelt's Jackson Day assertion of the public need for "facts and yet more facts, in the face of an opposition bent on hiding and distorting facts." Eight months ago there was completed under the joint auspices of these two departments an investigation which showed that under the New Deal federal funds had been used to help manufacturers dodge labor organization in the North by fleeing to Southern towns, where, under the guise of "vocational training," they were supplied with free labor and their foremen were put on the public pay roll as "instructors." Though embarrassing questions concerning this report were asked in House committee hearings on the Interior Department's appropriation bill for 1937, and even more embarrassing references were made to it in floor debate on the bill this past week, the departments in charge still refuse to make the report public. The official defense is that the report was drafted for administrative rather than public purposes—it seems there is a difference between the two—and in the opinion of officialdom contains nothing of public interest.

The man directly in charge of the report, Commissioner of Education Studebaker, tendered that sort of defense in a formal statement he supplied to Representative Crawford, a Michigan Republican, in answer to the charges made in the House, chiefly by Representatives Wigglesworth and Kahn, Republicans from Massachusetts and California respectively. Commissioner Studebaker's answer was chiefly to the effect that in the great majority of instances the government-subsidized vocational-training programs in the various states are

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being properly administered, and the public might get the wrong idea about the program as a whole from reading the "few instances of maladministration" in the investigators' report. Mr. Studebaker was more inclined to belittle the report than were the men who represented his office before the Appropriations Committee. In testimony given behind closed doors they admitted that the investigation had covered only thirteen "plant training programs" and was confined to textile and garment plants.

Publication of the report itself would show that virtually every tenet of vocational training had been violated; that the "students" were taught only one process of manufacture, became actual production workers in a few hours, and continued as "students" without pay from a few weeks to as long as six months; that no academic training was given but the educational pretense was carried to the extreme of organizing the "students" into Greek-letter fraternities which coarse persons would call "company unions"; that after weeks and months of training "students" were graduated to the factory pay rolls as "learners" at learners' wages; and that no effort was made to avoid bringing the production of these "students" into competition with the output of regularly employed workers in the textile and garment industries or to avoid creating a surplus of workers and, therefore, unemployment. Mr. Studebaker's colleagues told the committee this situation was being remedied, but they admitted that the Office of Education has only four inspectors and cannot properly superintend all the sixty-six "plant training programs" in operation under federal subsidy.

THE mild Congressional furor over the report was cooked up by a few labor lobbyists, acting independently of the official A. F. of L. lobby. According to the journals of commerce and finance, that lobby is the most powerful in Washington and has only to nod its collective head to make Congress jump through the hoop. The facts are quite to the contrary. The A. F. of L.'s full-time, salaried lobbyists do a lot of nodding, but it is usually of the somnolent kind. They compose a moribund crew, some of whose members long since should have been relegated to the infirmary, and their effectiveness on Capitol Hill is almost nil. Most of the effective lobbying in labor's interest is done by free agents.

The A. F. of L.'s professionals are preoccupied with chasing patronage for themselves and their pals, a fact attested in the latest edition of the federation's weekly clip sheet. It features proudly an announcement that "Red" Hushing, a brother of W. C. Hushing, one of the federation's paid lobbyists, has just been appointed United States Marshal for the Panama Canal Zone and that "the Senate promptly confirmed the appointment." While the men employed by union labor to lobby for them were busy maneuvering this appointment, the thirty-hour-week bill came up for action in the Senate and was passed over on objection by Senator Vandenberg. In the column adjoining the Hushing item appears an article on the thirty-hour bill, but no mention is made therein of how the federation's lobby flubbed its opportunity to carry out the A. F. of L. convention mandate to press this bill.

I Was an Editor in Germany

II. "Fire in the Reichstag!"

By FRANZ HOLLERING

AFTER I was forced out of the editorship of the Ullstein *Berliner Zeitung am Mittag* in December, 1931, I served as American correspondent for the Ullstein papers for a year. On January 4, 1933, I returned to Germany and became editor of the daily *12 Uhr Blatt* and the weekly *Montag Morgen,* both smaller left-democratic journals. As it happened, I started to work on January 30, the day Hitler came into power. The very first news item laid on my desk was a solemn declaration by Dr. Frick, the new Minister of the Interior, that in the Third Reich the freedom of the press would be inviolate. From that time on all official statements bore a similar relation to the truth.

Hitler dissolved the Reichstag and in "accordance with the constitution" called new elections for March 5. Things seemed to run smoothly, and many good people made fun of those who continued to distrust Hitler.

The *12 Uhr Blatt* was a morning paper, and therefore we worked at night. We soon realized that the Nazi regime also worked mainly at night—and at other things than torchlight demonstrations. Every hour brought stories of shootings in working-class districts, of motor-cyclists whizzing through the streets firing into windows, of armed gangs storming the beer halls that were the election headquarters of the workers' parties. The police and the Red Cross always arrived too late. The official press regularly proclaimed "Inhuman Communist Atrocities," whereas our objective and non-partisan reporters night after night piled up evidence that the attacks were made by Storm Troopers in civilian clothes. It was difficult to prove the truth, for the police were already covering up the tracks of the murderers and no longer gave out any information. Only indirectly, by describing all the incriminating circumstances of an attack, was it possible to hint at the truth. And the truth was that the terror was organized by Chancellor Hitler himself. Meanwhile, in the daytime, the official election campaign was being waged more and more furiously. Shock troops were sent to the assemblies of the opposition parties. They shouted down Brüning and wounded Stegerwald, his former Minister of Labor. Workers' meetings were broken up and their quarters demolished.

The attempt of the *12 Uhr Blatt* to report news objectively did not escape Goebbels's attention. In the *Angriff* I found myself mentioned in a list of radical journalists under the heading "Intellectual Murderers." In those days one learned to read and to write between the lines. I changed my address.

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In spite of the terror the election prospects throughout the country were that Hitler could not win the majority he wanted, much less the two-thirds' majority required to change the constitution. That, however, was his goal, and it was to be expected that he would stop at nothing to achieve it. He had already forbidden, on the flimsiest pretext, the election posters and meetings of the labor parties. A week before election open propaganda against the Nazis had ceased. The Storm Troopers dominated the streets. There was danger that the use of force might turn the voters against the regime. Yet it was obvious that desperate measures must be taken if the Chancellor was to have the legal cloak he needed for the violation of the constitution.

The editorial in *Montag Morgen* of February 26, 1933 —the last I wrote in Germany—began: "Unless something unforeseen happens, the Chancellor cannot win the election." An analysis of the probable election returns followed, and in conclusion came the statement that nothing unforeseen could happen because Hitler had not only taken the oath to abide by the constitution but had promised on innumerable occasions to govern "legally." As I intended, the article was misunderstood by the overworked censor, who interpreted it as a pro-Hitler statement. But the readers of the *Montag Morgen,* definitely an intellectual journal, understood very well. They even thought that the writer knew what the "unforeseen" circumstances might be, and the telephone rang incessantly. They were wrong; I had not the slightest idea of the nature of the desperate device the Nazis would use to break all opposition—though at the very moment there was a story on my desk which might have given me a clue.

The story was by a reporter who had covered a house-warming given by the well-known clairvoyant Erik Hanussen. Hanussen was a Moravian Jew whose real name was Steinschneider. He passed for a Danish nobleman and was on intimate terms with the Storm Troop leader Ernst (murdered by Hitler on June 30, 1934) and Count Helldorf, the present chief of police of Berlin, both of whom he supported out of his large earnings. He had begun his career as a clairvoyant while he was in the trenches by persuading the mail clerk to let him read the soldiers' letters from home before they were delivered. No wonder he could inform the captain that back in Vienna his wife had given birth to a healthy seven-pound boy! Before long Hanussen exchanged the front trenches for headquarters, where he entertained the officers with his gifts. After the war he led a fantastic life as itinerant magician in the Balkans. Then he hit on the idea of giving his hocus-pocus a scientific disguise, and his star rose on the German vaudeville stage. Hanussen made the most of the moment. He backed his business with an occult magazine which was printed by the same press as the *Montag Morgen* and the *12 Uhr Blatt.* That was how we knew of his connections with the National Socialists and had been able to gain admission to his house-warming.

My working hours were from 5 p.m. to 5 a.m., with time out for dinner between nine and ten. On February 27 the constant nervous strain under which every radical worked in those days had exhausted me, and instead of going out I decided to take an hour's nap in the office. I made myself as comfortable as I could on two armchairs and was dozing off when a telephone conversation in the next room roused me. "Fire in the Reichstag," a reporter shouted. A short circuit, I decided, and turned over. A second alarm sounded, a third, a fourth, a fifth! I jumped up. The Reichstag was going up in flames. The "unforeseen" had happened.

Fifteen minutes later, after the rush in handling the sensational news was over, I sat down at the telephone and began warning friends. Suddenly—it was a little after half-past nine—Hanussen, the clairvoyant, was on the wire.

"How much of a fire is there at the Reichstag?" he asked.

"Where are you calling from?"

"From my apartment." His apartment was miles away from the Reichstag.

"How did you find out about the fire?"

There was a second's pause, then Hanussen said: "As a matter of fact, I wanted to speak to the business manager. I want to warn you all. Be on your guard tonight. No one knows what may happen. The Communists have set fire to the Reichstag."

"The Communists? Ridiculous! They wouldn't dream of it. They don't want to commit suicide. Their policy—"

"Wait and see! And better be careful."

He hung up. The story of his house-warming flashed into my mind. The intimate of the Nazis had seen "flames" in a trance. They had now become real.

The first official statement concerning the fire blamed a gang of incendiaries, who had supposedly been pursued and shot at. But all except Van der Lubbe had disappeared without a trace. Then came a second statement which spoke of a Communist conspiracy and of conclusive evidence that Social Democrats were implicated. Two Socialist journalists, generally known as entirely harmless citizens, had been arrested. New versions of the fire came in hourly. The latest invariably contradicted all the rest. Obviously someone was hard at work making up these statements.

At eleven o'clock I wrote an editorial telling the truth: all the evidence indicated that the Nazis had set fire to the Reichstag. At midnight I threw this manuscript into the wastebasket. I wrote another, a more cautious editorial, and then another. None of them would do. It was plain that from now on not a word of truth could appear in print. News had already reached me that the few proletarian papers which had survived so far no longer existed. The current issues had been confiscated at the printing presses, the editors arrested. A night of terror, unbroken since that hour, had descended upon Germany.

My assistant smiled ironically at my attempts to give the truth a guise in which it would escape censorship. (I had suspected from the very first that this man was a Nazi, and later I learned that the owner of the paper had hired him just to be on the safe side.) Finally he came to me with the proof of the headline "Madman Sets Fire to the Reichstag," and quite sensibly he asked whether it wasn't I who had gone mad. For the headline was a flat contradiction of the official position that the Reichstag had been fired by the left parties. It would mean the end of the paper, it would cost a hundred persons their jobs, and moreover it would never get out into the street.

The dead line was getting closer and closer. Reports of the suppression and confiscation of various publications kept pouring in. I edited the articles of the terrorized reporters, trying to make them more objective. But what worried me was the front-page headline and how we might

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tell the real story. The make-up man stood over me demanding copy. Finally I gave him the government statements to set up, directing him to put the most flagrant inconsistencies in larger type. Not till the last second, with the whole staff waiting, did I see the way out. Headline: "The Reichstag Fire." Subhead: "Official Reports of the Prussian Government News Service." Then an entire page of these reports, and not another word! That page was a huge tangle of lies—taken directly from official sources. Any child would understand: the government lies! Any child would know why.

For an hour we waited anxiously. Would the paper escape suppression? It did. Goebbels had not yet perfected his machinery to the point of censoring Hitler and Göring.

Toward the end of the election campaign the terror grew with each night. Two of our staff men were kidnapped by Storm Troopers. One was captured as he left the printer; the other was dragged out of his bed and beaten to a bloody pulp. Many journalists I knew vanished without leaving a trace. Foreign visitors, and even most of the people who lived in Berlin, suspected nothing. Terror organized on modern lines remains invisible.

The papers gave no inkling of what was really going on, although reports of kidnappings, beatings, murders were constantly coming in. We sent these reports to newspapers in Prague and Vienna, but they were not used. Why not? Because they were not believed—not yet!

Only in the office itself did we now feel safe. Goebbels had forbidden violence in newspaper offices in order not to arouse our friends, the foreign correspondents. The most difficult thing for us was to evade the Storm Troopers who lay in ambush on the way from the printer, and to find places of refuge after work. With caution, tricks, money, and the technique acquired during and after the war, we managed it for a while, always going criss-cross through the city, changing conveyances unexpectedly, and sleeping in a different place every day. But what was the good of enduring all this torment? There was no longer anything one could do. Passive resistance had lost all meaning. What was the use of printing covert, ambiguous little statements in the face of the greatest crime in modern history?

On Friday, March 3, I escaped a visit from the Gestapo. On the morning of the election, March 5, 1933, a friendly representative of a foreign power informed me that a warrant for my arrest had been issued. I had to leave Berlin. But where could I go? Every train, every automobile going across the border, was inspected. After a day of aimless wandering in the streets of Berlin I took a local train to Dresden, and at two-thirty at night I crossed the German border into Czecho-Slovakia by a route that is still used by refugees.

On the day of my flight the *12 Uhr Blatt* was suspended, to reappear only when the owners had completely capitulated. *Montag Morgen* was later suppressed altogether.

Erik Hanussen was murdered by Storm Troopers two weeks after the burning of the Reichstag. His body was found in the woods near Berlin. His head was almost shot off. The clairvoyant had foreseen many things, but like the rest of us, not enough.

[*This is the second of two articles by Franz Höllering. The first appeared last week.*]

Correspondence

Share-Cropper Misery and Hope

To the Editors of The Nation:

A blizzard out of the Northwest brings suffering to hundreds of destitute and homeless share-croppers who have been evicted from the land because of membership in the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. All the families on one plantation—more than a hundred persons, including twenty-eight small children and three infants—were evicted because they were members of a union which sought to make the landlord settle his account with them. With only $16 among them, after a year's grinding toil in the cotton fields, in which they averaged nearly a bale of cotton to the acre, they had not sufficient food, bedding, or clothes. Blacklisted by the planters, none of them have been able to settle in other places. They were not even permitted to gather firewood from any of the nearby plantations.

The struggles of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union against the domination of the landlords and planters in Arkansas and other states of the South and Southwest have aroused the determined opposition of the plantation interests. Mass evictions of tenants who are members of the union are taking place on numerous plantations. Union meetings have been broken up by planters and officers of the law, while men, women, and children have been kicked and flogged, shot, arrested, and jailed.

Howard Kester, union organizer and secretary of the Central Defense Committee of the union, was dragged from a Methodist church near Earle, Arkansas, on January 18 as he attempted to address a meeting of 450 white and Negro share-croppers. Kester was accompanied by H. I. Goldberger, union attorney. Both were threatened and driven from town. The church was practically wrecked as the mob of planters slugged share-croppers with ax handles and billies and brandished pistols over their heads. All of the windows of the church were broken. Women as well as men were attacked.

Two Negro share-croppers were shot by deputy sheriffs as they were returning home from a union meeting which had been raided and broken up by another mob. No arrests of planters' thugs have been made and none are expected by the union, as the officers are in league with the plantation interests and have sworn to stop the union "with Winchester rifles if necessary." The mob which took Kester from the church near Earle warned him not to return on pain of death and announced that if "the union doesn't stop disturbing our labor there's going to be another Elaine massacre."

The union has grown within a year from a membership of a few hundred to more than 25,000. Despite the terror which has broken out anew in Crittenden County, new locals are being organized each day. After the meeting at Earle was broken up the organizers took in about twenty-five new members. One of the men who joined last night said, "We know the union is all right now, for the big bosses is trying to bust it up." Despite eviction and terror the union members throughout this area are standing firm. Scores trekked through the swamps and over the muddy plantation roads to come to Memphis today to pledge their faith and loyalty to the union.

The union needs funds to fight its legal battles, and for food, clothing, and shelter. Contributions should be sent to H. L. Mitchell, secretary, Box 5215, Memphis, Tennessee, or to John Herling, 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York.

Memphis, Tenn., January 18

H. L. Mitchell,
Executive Secretary
Howard Kester,
Secretary, Central Defense Committee

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A New Law for Privacy

To the Editors of The Nation:

The article The Lindberghs Leave, by Oswald Garrison Villard, in *The Nation* of January 8 impressed me with the pitiful inadequacy of our laws in protecting an individual's right of privacy. The statute of New York State (Civil Rights Law, Article 5, Sections 50, 51) provides that a person, firm, or corporation that uses for advertising purposes or for the purposes of trade the name, portrait, or picture of any living person without having first obtained the written consent of such person, or if a minor of his or her parent or guardian, is guilty of a misdemeanor, and an action in the civil courts may be maintained for an injunction and damages.

I would recommend to the legislatures of every state that a statutory provision be made in the penal law or criminal code to the effect that any person, firm, or corporation that prints, publishes, edits, or knowingly circulates, sells, distributes, or publicly displays any book, paper, document, or written or printed matter in any form containing the photograph, portrait, or picture of any living person under the age of twenty-one years, without having first obtained the written consent of his or her parent or guardian, or the consent of the police authorities, is guilty of a misdemeanor.

Such a statute would promptly discourage the Mephistopheles of journalism (see *The Nation,* August 17, 1918) and his cohorts in their nefarious activities.

New York, January 6 Louis Marder

A Threat to Workers' Schools

To the Editors of The Nation:

The workers' schools on the Pacific Coast are threatened with fascist destruction. In Seattle on January 7 legionnaires raided the School of Social Science. In Los Angeles on January 17 the Los Angeles Workers' School was threatened by the Hearst *Examiner* and the anti-labor *Times*. The article in the *Examiner* appeared on the front page under big headlines: "L. A. Red College Revealed." On the following day both papers carried editorials. The one in the *Times* was labeled "'Legal' Treason" and that in the *Examiner* "Colleges of Crime." The *Examiner* stated: "We do not wait until this or that insect pest gets an upper hand before taking steps to stamp it out. We know that it would then be too late. We should be as immediately active in suppressing those colleges of crime in which young Americans are being taught disloyalty to the institutions of their country."

Los Angeles, January 21 Miriam Bonner, Director,
Los Angeles Workers' School

Anne Douglas Sedgwick

To the Editors of The Nation:

I am preparing for publication a collection of the letters of the late Anne Douglas Sedgwick (Mrs. Basil de Selincourt). I shall be greatly obliged if persons possessing letters from her will send them to me for consideration for this purpose. Copies of such letters as are desired for inclusion in the proposed book will be taken and the originals returned promptly to their owners. Letters should be addressed to Far End, Kingham, Oxon, England.

Boston, January 15 Basil de Selincourt

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Labor and Industry

Starving on Relief

By ISIDOR FEINSTEIN

THE President is in a fighting mood these days. He trounced the Tories at Atlanta. He trounced the Tories in his annual message. He trounced the Tories at the Jackson Day dinner. Nevertheless, the poor Tories, though trounced, continue to be well fed. As much cannot be said of the unemployed.

At Atlanta Mr. Roosevelt thought it "of interest to point out that national surveys prove that the average of our citizenship lives today on what would be called by the medical fraternity a third-class diet. If the country lived on a second-class diet we would need to put many more acres than we use today back into the production of foodstuffs for domestic consumption. If the nation lived on a first-class diet we would have to put more acres than we ever cultivated into the production of an additional supply of things for Americans to eat. Why, speaking in broad terms in following up this particular illustration, are we living on a third-class diet? For the very simple reason that the masses of the American people have not got the purchasing power to eat more and better food." Speaking in narrow terms it might also be said that millions of Americans are living on a third-, fourth-, and fifth-class diet because Mr. Roosevelt—for all his Tory-trouncing—insists on cutting relief.

Mr. Roosevelt grew even more eloquent on the subject in his annual message to Congress. "Shall we say," he asked, "to the several millions of unemployed citizens who face the very problem of existence—yes, of getting enough to eat: 'We will withdraw from giving you work, we will turn you back to the charity of your communities and to those men of selfish power who tell you that perhaps they will employ you if the government leaves them strictly alone'?" The answer is that it has now been Mr. Roosevelt's policy for some time to get the federal government out of relief as quickly as possible and in fact to turn "several millions of unemployed citizens who face the very problem of existence—yes, of getting enough to eat"—back on the charity of their communities.

While the President at Atlanta was denouncing "gentlemen in well-warmed and well-stocked clubs" and spreading himself on the subject of third-class diets, relief administrators in the District of Columbia cut families on relief down to a fourth-class diet. An order was issued reducing all relief allowances 25 per cent. The Washington, D. C., average will now be $22.50 a *month* per family. At about the same time, too, Secretary Wallace was asking in a radio speech, "How can you feed and clothe and maintain the health of a family of four or five properly on $15 or $20 a *week?*" "The answer," Secretary Wallace said, "is that you can't." District of Columbia jobless may find it difficult to appreciate the unconscious humor in this or in the fact that in November, when the federal government began to cut relief, a New York *Times* tabulation showed that dividends reached their highest total since June, 1931.

The condition of the unemployed is of little interest to the larger part of the American press. A small group of liberal papers pays some attention to their problems. The Hearst press supplies us with such stories as the recent one published in the New York *American* under the heading, "Give Us More! More! Demand Those on Relief; Mostly Foreigners, Says Bullard." The rest is silence. But from stray items and from the Federated Press, a labor news service, it is possible to put together a picture of the plight of those on the relief rolls.

Here are some glimpses of relief conditions in the country, covering conditions during the past few months:

Allentown, Pennsylvania. Members of the Inter-County Unemployed and Works Division will not dine on turkey Thanksgiving day—or even corned beef; they will be on picket duty all week before local relief offices in Berks, Lehigh, Lancaster, and York counties, protesting against the discontinuance of relief.

Austin, Texas. So many people were thrown off relief last fall "to pick cotton," and never reinstated, that C. E. Wayman, district WPA administrator, complains there are not enough employables left on the rolls to carry on county highway improvements with full man power.

New York City. "Everybody will have a Thanksgiving dinner," the Emergency Relief Bureau announced, but Thanksgiving came and went and everybody didn't. Among those who didn't were the 100,000 human beings represented by 28,000 piled-up relief applications which the bureau's overworked staff has not yet had time to investigate.

Boston (AP). A complaint that payment of a "coolie" wage by the WPA was directly responsible for lowering wage scales of professional and technical workers in and near Boston was made to the state WPA today. A complete investigation was asked, six specific cases being named of alleged "chiseling" among private employers using the WPA wage scale as an excuse for reducing wages.

Phoenix, Arizona. Two more workers have been deported to Mexico as an aftermath of a Phoenix relief workers' strike when police and thugs charged pickets with clubs and tear gas, injuring fifty. The two men, José Flores and José P. Barcenas, who bring the total number of deportees to seven, were charged with being Communists. Felony charges are still standing against twenty workers who participated in the strike.

Newport, Kentucky (UP). Enraged because they had not been paid, 200 WPA workers raided a federal relief warehouse here today and seized 100 bags of flour and other articles before they were dispersed by police.

New Orleans (FP). The tapering-off process preparatory to "quitting this business of relief" is already bearing fruit in New Orleans. Eva Killian, twenty-nine, was declared by physicians to be starving to death when brought by an ambulance to a charity hospital here. She had been living on coffee and bread. A child who fainted at school was found to have been without food for twenty-six hours. A woman and four children were found hiding in an empty house. An aged woman and her fourteen-year-old grand-

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daughter, found rummaging in the scrap heaps behind grocery stores, are but two of hundreds engaged in similar searches.

Chicago (FP). Single men on relief will not have to starve and freeze this winter, the emergency relief commission announces. They will have a chance to enter work camps. "In return for their work they receive sustenance plus one dollar a week in wages," the announcement says.

Newburgh, New York (Special to the New York *Herald Tribune*). About 300 WPA employees who have received no pay since December 14 assembled this morning at the City Hall to see what was wrong. They received only about half the pay they expected on December 14.

Vancouver, Washington (FP). A decision that WPA workers are not relief recipients or indigents has been handed down by Washington WPA officials. While at first sight the decision would seem to be in favor of the workers, the real effect of the ruling is to deprive the WPA workers of free medicine, medical aid, and hospital service from the county. The workers are supposed to furnish these items from their meager WPA wages, "just the same as other wage-earners do."

Austin, Texas (FP). Texas relief clients face the prospect of living on half-rations until February. After February there may be no rations at all. County relief administrators have received $375,000 for December, and the state is asking for $500,000 more in federal funds to keep relief up even to its customarily low Southern level. There is little prospect that the added amount will be forthcoming. No provision for the continuance of the state relief system in any form after February was made at the recent legislative session.

Des Moines, Iowa (FP). Calling the $40 a month paid WPA workers in sixty-six of Iowa's ninety-nine counties a "starvation wage," 300 labor and unemployed delegates, meeting under the chairmanship of President J. C. Lewis of the state federation of labor, called for a statewide strike January 2 for the prevailing scale of wages. The strike would affect nearly 30,000 workers.

Toledo (FP). The relief crisis is acute in Toledo, as funds appropriated by the state legislature face exhaustion before the middle of the month. Wholesalers have announced they will cut off credit for relief supplies.

Sioux Falls, South Dakota (FP). When South Dakota WPA workers recently demanded increases in wages which were frequently lower than direct relief had been, WPA Administrator M. A. Kennedy issued a statement charging them with "laziness" and threatening arrests. A week later he was all smiles and good-will as he announced an average raise of $8 a month. What changed his tune was that the Workers' Alliance lined up the trade unions, the Sioux Falls Ministerial Association, and various civic groups in support of the jobless, and Kennedy quickly found it possible to get South Dakota raised from a Class 2 to a Class 1 state, thus bringing in the higher wage scale.

Boston (FP). Unless the "relief-roll-preferential" system of hiring is abolished, members of local unions affiliated with the Boston Building Trades Council will be barred from transferring from ERA and WPA projects to contract work. The move is designed to protect the incomes of building-trades workers not on relief rolls.

St. Louis (FP). WPA workers, already harassed by the difficulties of providing food and clothing for their families on $55 a month, are facing the prospect of living in the damp cellars of the city's most run-down buildings. The city's real-estate exchange, in a move almost tantamount to boycott, has advised its members not to lease property to WPA workers on the ground that their wages do not permit their paying rent.

Globe, Arizona (FP). Ten cents a day for food, clothing, and shelter; this is what Arizona's December allocation of $2,294 for relief in Gila County works out to when divided among 700 persons on the dole. The end of federal relief is causing untold misery.

And now one last look at what has been going on in the President's own backyard while he has been trouncing the Tories:

Washington (FP). With relief cut 25 per cent on account of stoppage of federal funds, slow starvation is already gripping many jobless in the District of Columbia, case workers report. One relief office has received three letters in a week from clinic doctors who say that relief patients sent to them don't need medicine, "they need food."

Leroy Halbert, District relief statistician, estimates that of 14,984 persons certified for WPA jobs, 2,500 will receive less each month on the "security wage" than they have been getting on direct relief.

Facts for Consumers

BEFORE the Seventy-fourth Congress reconvened, the food-and-drug bill was reported to be on the "must" calendar. Now the rumor is current that no action will be taken on it. Representative Virgil Chapman, chairman of the subcommittee to which the bill has been referred, has been quoted in the trade press as saying that he is too busy to consider food-and-drug legislation. Speaker Byrnes wants to limit the calendar to "urgent" bills, and does not consider the food-and-drug measure in that category. The powerful Proprietory Association is of course lobbying for the passage of the bill in its present amended and emasculated form and may be able to exert sufficient pressure to bring it out of committee. Except for a few diehards, leaders in the affected industries would like to see the bill passed in the hope that the public's interest in food-and-drug legislation would then subside. Whether it may not be to the best interest of consumers to let the present bill die in committee, and to make food-and-drug legislation a campaign issue, is being seriously discussed in many quarters. The *Consumer*, official publication of the Consumers' Division, devotes several pages of its current issue to an unfavorable article on the bill, and the *Journal of the American Medical Association* points out editorially that "legislation should be enacted in a form better designed for the protection of the consumer." The bill's proponents maintain that even in its present form it is better than the old Wiley act. The next move is up to Representative Chapman and his committee.

* * *

A THREE-COLUMN advertisement in the New York *Times* of Pro-Ker—the "latest achievement" of Charles Nessler, inventor of the permanent wave—is another example of the advertising copywriter's art. Two months ago Pro-Ker entered into a stipulation with the Federal Trade Commission that it would stop "representing that the preparation is a competent treatment for baldness or any other hair troubles, and that it will replace falling hair or retain the amount of hair

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on the head at the time the use of the product is begun. It will no longer be advertised that this product makes the scalp vital, healthy, or strong and creates the perfect hair-growing condition." A skilful copywriter is not daunted even by such an apparently inclusive stipulation. The agreement provides that Pro-Ker shall not be advertised as a "competent treatment." The new advertising claims only that "the Pro-Ker treatment *helps* [italics mine] retain at least the amount of hair you now have. It will help you bring your scalp back to normal. . . . Any other promises are simply misleading. Intelligent people cannot accept them." The Bureau of Investigation of the American Medical Association writes that although it has made no thorough analysis of this product its laboratory made some tests of Pro-Ker in 1934 and found it "essentially a soap solution possessing an odor resembling tar. There is of course nothing wonderful about such a mixture."

* * *

WORK done by the Food and Drug Administration during the past month includes seizures of unclean butter shipped by Swift and Company and Jerpe Dairy Products Corporation; of unsanitary limburger cheese shipped by Badger Brodhead Cheese Company, Lakeshore Cheese Company, and Shefford Cheese Company; of chili powder shipped by Miller Brothers Company and of cocoa shipped by the Massachusetts Chocolate Company, both found to contain excessive lead and arsenic residue; and of wine contaminated with fluorine shipped by Coast Wineries.

Among the fines assessed in cases against drug manufacturers was one of $200 against the Upjohn Company. The Aconite Tincture Tablets manufactured by this company were found to possess a potency of only approximately 40 per cent of the amount stated on the label. There have been four previous seizures of Upjohn products and three prosecutions. The company is now reported to be making an effort to establish better control of production.

* * *

THE complaint about the activities of consumer cooperatives recently filed with the Milwaukee Association of Commerce by the local retail grocers' association is undoubtedly good news to all friends of consumer cooperation. Apparently the Milwaukee co-ops have grown so strong that tradesmen are now lining up to fight them. The two-million-dollar business reported by the cooperative Wisconsin Wholesale Food Distributors aroused the grocers to a realization that the consumer-cooperation movement is a real threat to their profits.

What may be even more significant news is the announcement by Edward A. Filene of his projected chain of consumer-cooperative department stores. Into his Consumer Distribution Corporation has already gone more than a year of planning; behind it is Filene's successful experience with credit unions and with retailing. As the founder of credit unions in the United States, Filene has already made a noteworthy contribution to the cooperative cause. Now he is turning to retailing, the business in which he amassed his fortune. Filene expects that his cooperative department stores will "eliminate the tremendous wastes of traditional merchandising" and show the way to enterprises which are operated for private profit. Consumer Distribution Corporation starts with a capital of $1,000,000. It will compete directly with large retail organizations and will make its bid for business on the sharing of profits with consumers and on the sale of consumer goods according to specifications and established grades. If the C. D. C. plans are carried through, we shall have the interesting experiment of a cooperative organized as a big business meeting private-profit institutions on their own ground.

RUTH BRINDZE

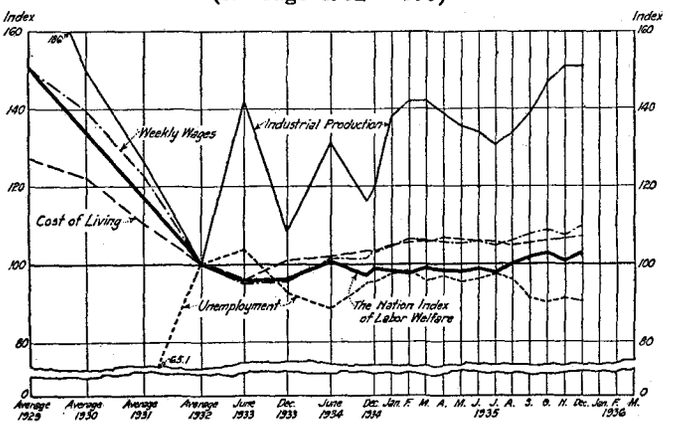
[*Facts for Consumers appears every other week in* The Nation. *Miss Brindze cannot answer questions about the merits of individual products.*]

The Labor Index

AIDED by seasonal factors, *The Nation* Index of Labor Welfare regained all of the previous month's losses in December and is once more 2.6 per cent above the 1932 average. The seasonal influence was noticeable primarily in an increase of 342,000 in the number of department-store employees, which more than offset a 0.4 per cent decline in factory employment. Total pay rolls in the manufacturing and non-manufacturing industries were up $13,300,000, bringing the average weekly wage to a new high of $22.47. For the fifth consecutive month the National Industrial Conference Board reported a sharp increase in the cost of living, raising the index 8.7 per cent above the 1932 level. According to the more conservative estimates of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the cost of living was 3.3 per cent above that of December of a year ago, as against a 7 per cent increase in weekly wages. Real wages for employed workers were 2.8 per cent over the 1932 level, but 15 per cent below that of 1929.

THE CHART OF LABOR WELFARE

(Average 1932 = 100)



As an illustration of the difficulty of obtaining accurate statistics in the field of labor welfare we cite the varying estimates of unemployment made by different organizations for the month of November:

The National Industrial Conference Board	9,177,000
Government Committee on Economic Security (September, 1935)	10,915,000
The American Federation of Labor	11,672,187
National Research League	14,175,000
Labor Research Association	17,029,000

Taking the revised A. F. of L. estimates as a criterion, we find that a 50 per cent increase in industrial activity since 1932 has brought a decrease in unemployment of only 11 per cent.

Preliminary figures for December for the various items entering into *The Nation* Index, together with revised figures for November, follow:

(Average 1932 = 100)

	Dec., 1935	*Nov., 1935*	*Dec., 1934*
Industrial Production	150*	151	120
Average Weekly Wages	110*	107.9†	103
Cost of Living	107*	106.4	103.7
Real Wages	102.8*	101.4†	99.3
Unemployment	89*	91	94
Index of Labor Welfare	102.6*	100.8†	98.1

* Preliminary. † Revised.

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"IT SEEMS INCREDIBLE that one woman could see and do so much in ten years. . . . It is a picture, a record, vivid and shrewd, of ten world-shaking years. It is a book that ought to be put in the hands of every complacent middle-class man and especially woman in the country. . . . A Footnote to Folly is sometimes breathtaking, but it is consistently illuminating."

—*Granville Hicks, New Masses.*

"IT IS INEVITABLE that A Footnote to Folly, being in essence one of the great pleas, packed with tenderness and a quiet bitterness like sugar and vinegar, for decency toward the weak and justice for the strong, should also turn out to be one of the most powerful documents against war of our time, a kind of children's *All Quiet on the Western Front.* . . . Is there anywhere in the world a monument to the Unknown Child? It is here, a bit of sculpture in prose done by Mary Vorse, and underneath it are chiseled the words A Footnote to Folly."

—*Harold E. Stearns, The Nation.*

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Midwinter Book Section

"He Belongs to the Past"

By JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

THERE is one phrase which seems to fall with peculiar ease from the pen of the contemporary critic: "He belongs to the past." Sometimes, to be sure, this phrase indicates no more than a political disapproval. The author thus relegated has no significance in relation to certain of the critic's burning convictions, and it is convenient to dispose of him thus without being compelled to deny absolutely those qualities responsible for the esteem in which he was held. But though this sort of dismissal is both frequent and exasperating, it is not precisely the sort I have now in mind. More purely literary schools and subschools come and go with vertiginous rapidity. Sometimes, indeed, they hardly achieve any existence outside the minds of their members and of a few cliquish commentators who discover a new "tendency," enthusiastically chronicle its development, and then announce its exhaustion before most members of even the more distinctly literary public are aware of its existence. Yet any one of them is used with all seriousness as a point of reference, not only in portentous literary criticism, but in the very book reviews which solemnly "date" yesterday's novel with reference to the novel of the day before.

There is even something a little absurd about gravely classifying a novel as "pre-Hemingway" or "post-Hemingway," or in declaring that "Erskine Caldwell has made it impossible any longer to write in this fashion about tenant farmers." To say anything of the sort is to give at once too much credit and too little to Messrs. Hemingway and Caldwell—too much because it exaggerates their power to impose a norm upon our persistently variable sensibilities, too little because it is inevitably preparing the way for the not distant moment when some other more or less original writer will be hailed as having closed their day.

Mr. Caldwell and Mr. Hemingway are worthy of admiration, not because they mark epochs and supersede all previous imaginative formulations of certain areas of experience and sensibility, but because their own particular formulations are to some extent original and convincing. Even the appearance of Mr. Eliot's "Waste Land" or Mr. Joyce's "Ulysses" did not correspond to a crisis in human sensibility of sufficient magnitude to justify us in speaking of the times before and after their publication as we speak of the Renaissance or the Middle Ages. But neither, on the other hand, did Mr. Joyce, for instance, become a mere historical curiosity when M. Malraux began to write.

Surely few novelists have ever been regarded as more "important" by their cult than Mr. Joyce, and yet only recently I saw him referred to by a generally perceptive and distinctly "advanced" critic as worthy of honor because "he summed up an epoch" now past—as though, of course, he could no longer have anything really pertinent to say for the new generation and was from now on to be regarded as an imposing historical monument about as "modern" as Boethius and somewhat less so than the author of "Piers Plowman," who, by virtue of the fact that he spoke with compassion of the economically unfortunate, somehow anticipated a sentiment which, except in very rare instances, was not felt by any writer who lived longer ago than the day before yesterday.

When a certain very young but "promising" essayist collected in the slender volume which he derisively denominated "The Works of Max Beerbohm" those seven brief pieces which constituted his output up to the moment of publication, he concluded the intentionally slender claim to fame with a farewell discourse called Diminuendo, and toward the end of it he bowed his head to those enthusiasts of his own day who also loved to close epochs as though they were doors:

> I shall write no more. Already I feel myself to be a trifle outmoded. I belong to the Beardsley period. Younger men, with months of activity before them, with fresher schemes and notions, with newer enthusiasms, have pressed forward since then. *Credo junioribus.* Indeed, I stand aside with no regret. For to be outmoded is to be a classic, if one has written well.

Nowadays it behooves writers to take with something like real seriousness the attitude which Mr. Beerbohm took with his dandiacal tongue in his fresh young cheek. We use up our authors with reckless rapidity, and we should certainly be most of the time without a genius to admire if it were not for the fact that we canonize as readily as we relegate to limbo. And there is one precious consolation enjoyed by the author of "The Works" which is denied to those of our contemporaries who, like him, no longer have "months of activity before them." To be outmoded is not now to be a classic. It is merely to be "historically interesting," to "sum up an epoch" (of perhaps six months' duration). And the best that the discoverer of last year's new literary form can hope for is to hear himself referred to as a writer as interesting as it is possible for any pre-somebody-else novelist, or poet, or playwright to be.

Doubtless those commentators who divide and subdivide recent literature into a score of compartments, discovering semi-annual turning-points and gravely deciding that a certain writer was indubitably great five years ago but is now separated from the present by an unbridgeable gap of time, get some sense that they are magnifying the importance of the material with which they are dealing and give themselves the illusion that they are actually doing what every critic would like to do—namely, exercise his powers continuously upon works of real importance. But in actual fact the effect of their attitude is not only to render the highest rank which they ever bestow ridiculously ephemeral, and the effective life of a genius like the effective life of a may-fly; it is also to render trivial the whole enterprise of literature by depriving it of one of its fundamental assumptions—the assumption, that is, that human intelligence and human feeling are characterized by a continuity in virtue of which it is possible for a man to say something which will continue to seem to the point some centuries, let alone some months, after it was said.

Consequently, there is a fundamental contradiction in

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the belief that James Joyce was a really great writer five years ago and a mere monument to a past age today. He could not have been great then if he is not almost as great today. Men cannot be so very different from what they were a short time before. If they were, it would be not only literature which could not exist, for neither could society. The world keeps going by virtue of the fact that there is a good deal that is constant about the way men think and feel, about what they believe and want. The world changes. It may perhaps be changing with unusual rapidity today. But ninety-nine one-hundredths of anything significant said about it five years ago is significant today. Any author who really became outmoded so soon could only be an author concerned exclusively with the most insignificant ripples on the surface of human nature.

In the pages of *The Nation* itself I have seen estimates of still living writers the whole point of which was the demonstration that their "importance" consisted almost exclusively in their embodiment of attitudes now completely irrelevant to the concerns of more youthful men. But if this is really true, then either the writer discussed or the more youthful men must be of an almost inconceivable triviality. Of course, ideas, conceptions, and sensibilities are continuously modified by time, and of course it is very much worth while for any critic who is dealing with a writer not strictly contemporary to analyze those shades which distinguish him from newer talents. But if the man is worth talking about at all, then the most significant thing about him is that part which is still valid, and if nothing still valid exists he can never have been of any genuine significance whatever.

Let us test the statement that even the most outmoded writer who is interesting at all is interesting for something very nearly as pertinent as it ever was. Let us take, for example, Oscar Wilde, who certainly represents in its most extreme form the type of writer who is part of a temporary fashion. If one cared to do so one could analyze him exclusively in terms of what was false, cheap, and transitory. But one can also discover that he has things to say which are not only relevant today but relevant to the very discussion here pursued. "Fashion," he remarked, "is a form of ugliness so intolerable that we have to change it every six months." He was speaking, I presume, of hats and dresses, which we still do change every six months or oftener. But the remark is quite as applicable to fashions in literature and to those theories about art which have passed almost as frequently as fashions in clothes. Aesthetic doctrines of the sort which are vehemently preached as the truth at last by each newly modish school are merely forms of absurdity so intolerable that they also have to be changed every six months.

Kipling: Prophet of a Lost Frontier

By ALVIN JOHNSON

TO the youth of today Kipling is at most an artist of parts, a poet who is occasionally felicitous, a story-teller who is often thrilling. But to the youth of the late nineties Kipling was much more than this. He was the prophet of a new frontier, arriving just when the old frontier had disappeared in fact but not in the dreams and aspirations of the young.

More than two hundred years of a slowly receding frontier had stamped a definite character upon American youth. "Go West and grow up with the country" was an injunction dinned in the ears of every boy in every village. The majority went West only in their day dreams. Many were held back by lack of energy; many by satisfactory opportunities nearer home. But every county had its tales of young men who had gone West and had attained to wealth and power. Particularly in the communities that had grown up on a recent frontier, as in the prairie states, the yearning for an open West was intense. All through the country were men who had come empty-handed from the East or from Europe and now were owners of wide stretches of rich land, or had established a profitable business or an extensive legal or medical practice, developed from insignificance by the unearned increment of community growth.

The westering impulse was in the nervous mechanism of American youth, as the swarming impulse is in the nervous mechanism of the bee. Probably no generation felt this impulse more intensely than the youth of the late nineties. But the West had run out into the Pacific Ocean. Apparently there was nothing for the swarming youth to do but fly disconsolately around the old hive like bees without a queen to give impetus and direction to their flight.

Then Kipling appeared, to point out to American youth that the greater part of the world, though thickly occupied by dark-skinned peoples, was a majestic frontier for the expansion of the white race, particularly the English-speaking part of the race, with its alleged instinct for government and justice. Prior to the advent of Kipling, Americans had thought of British India and colonial possessions generally as nothing more than fields of exploitation for greedy imperialist nations. When they tried to picture to themselves the type of Englishmen who made up the imperial personnel, they summoned before their imagination Warren Hastings and his pirate crew, or Joseph Sedley, Collector of Boggley Wallah, or some more contemporaneous band of retired Indian civil servants, rich, fat, and choleric, with livers permanently gone bad. There was nothing in this sort of picture to tempt the young American who had dreamed of rich territories, vacant except for a few scattering Indian tribes who did nothing with the natural resources and therefore might justly be ordered to move on. It was a clean and moral life to which the young American looked forward and from which he hoped to grow rich—not the life of a gorging robber among a helpless native population.

Kipling changed the picture entirely. Imperial dominion as seen through Kipling's pages was characteristically the establishment of order where there had been villainous tyranny or bloody anarchy before. There were, indeed, occasional buccaneers, like the Man Who Would Be King, but even their greedy enterprises, if successful, would be followed by orderly government and strict justice, so far as justice

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could be done where evidence is as dark as the witness's skin. Essentially, British imperialism was a moral enterprise. It was an imperative moral enterprise. The white man had no right to keep to himself his genius for government. He was morally bound to put it at the service of peoples not possessed of the true political instincts. To be sure, such peoples would not understand the value of the white man's gifts, and therefore would not accept them without resistance. The application of a certain amount of force would be unavoidable, but an imperial moralist would apply force in as humane a fashion as possible.

The youthful reader of Kipling could dream of himself as the gallant commander of an intrepid squad of white soldiers, cowing untold thousands of gleaming-eyed barbarians bent on rapine and murder; or he could dream of himself as the administrator of a half-forgotten province, making his own final decisions in matters of life and death, fighting famine and plague and crushing the native intrigue that was more disastrous to the population than either. He would perform his difficult duties perhaps while burning up with fever, and would be rewarded with severe assaults on his integrity by uninformed busybodies at home. It has never been expected that even the most moral of men should invariably serve God for naught. Our gallant soldier or brave administrator would live like a prince, surrounded by dark-skinned servants and dependents to whom he would stand as Protector of the Poor—a career very different from the only one actually in sight for our Kipling reader, the job of bookkeeper in Brown's Hay, Grain, and Coal Store—and among the dark-skinned peoples one might stumble upon treasure trove.

At a slightly earlier period the expansion of commerce and industry in England and Germany had slowed down under a long depression, and the rising generation saw its hope of careers at home sadly thwarted. There, too, the young responded eagerly to Kipling's call to the imperial frontier. It is, however, doubtful whether European youth was raised to quite the same romantic height as that of America. European youths had never known a frontier at home. They could not have felt so bitter a sense of deprivation, even though they found their condition equally hopeless.

If in the late nineties Mexico and South America had fallen into a chaos of revolution, it would have been difficult to restrain young America from taking up the white man's burden in earnest. We were prompt enough to seize upon a flimsy pretext to wrest Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines from Spain. But the great expansion of world industry after the turn of the century and the enormous multiplication of urban careers opened new opportunities at home. The yearning toward colonial careers subsided as quickly as it arose.

Bernard Shaw has explained the waning of Kipling's popularity on the ground that he had never grown up. But the real trouble was that the world had grown up. Even the youths are grown up and sit on their haunches brooding over a gray world without frontiers to attract, whether of the free West or the slave South: a world with the places of promise tightly held by the vested right of the older men and those whom they choose to favor. Kipling can still speak to youth, but he cannot speak for it. The prophet in him is silenced, for there is no longer a promised land.

Rorty Reports America

Where Life Is Better. An Unsentimental American Journey. By James Rorty. Reynal and Hitchcock. $3.

SOME months ago James Rorty started out from his farm in Connecticut to report the United States for the New York *Post* and other publications. Like a great many other worried people, writers especially, he wanted to know what kind of action might be expected from American majorities in our present economic and social breakdown. There were quite a lot of us riding around the country in buses or flivvers like Rorty's at about the same time, in search of the same information. We pulled in and out of industrial centers, spent many days in small towns, hung around CCC camps and other federal projects, stared appalled at the shanty settlements and cabin villages of our pariahs—Negroes, Mexicans, poor whites—tried to discover *in situ* what Louisiana and California fascisms are made of, picked up all sorts of people constantly, and listened and listened and listened.

We were not doing this in a mere hunt for picturesque literary material. Nor, as is clearly indicated in the subtitle of Rorty's book, was it a romantic impulse. The thing that was driving us to explore this country and more especially this people was—and of course still is—affecting people like ourselves in other countries in much the same way. It was something that should make Rorty's book as important to you as your morning paper. It was fear.

James Rorty is a writer who takes himself seriously. This means that to him truthful and useful writing is equivalent to living. He knows also that any social situation that curtails or destroys this activity attacks all creative activities by which human life can be made progressively freer. He sees very sharply the physical and spiritual threat to himself in such material for fascism as legalized strike-breaking, vigilante gangs, jingoism and racial terrorism, company unionism, and quasi-religious demagoguery of either the Long or the Coughlin type. Like the rest of us who, prodded by the spectacle of Germany, fear a parallel catastrophe at home, and who know that the only effective defense against it is the kind of mass defense that only the labor movement can mobilize, Rorty was looking for two things: first, the size and place and shape and characteristics of fascism in embryo; second, the number and strength and identity of the conscious fighters against fascism. In other words, he was looking at two armies, our enemies and our friends.

Rorty covered a lot more ground and worked much harder than most of the rest of us. He is furthermore—in contrast to such reporters as Spivak, for example—scrupulously honest; not one degree of wish-fulfilment distorts what he sees. His report is therefore pretty frightening, emphasized as it is by his own sickened thoughts and feelings. Duffus in the New York *Times* discounts the gravity of what Rorty says because somewhere in the book he records that he was shell-shocked in the World War. Well, I wasn't, and just the same I "smelled war"—saw it being prepared—as pervadingly as Rorty did. The kind of shock that Rorty is suffering from is deeper and more lasting because it is being inflicted on him all the time. You can see its cause in his account of how "rugged individualism" was destroying priceless natural and human resources everywhere he went, and of how the wasteful stupidity of economic anarchy was making life for the American majorities progressively worse and worse.

The picture is more moving because it is poetically made against the generous grandeur of New World landscape, the natural wealth of California, the industrial and scientific miracles displayed at the Chicago fair, the courage and wit of

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people struggling to free our wealth from paralysis-for-profit. Rorty notes in a number of places that the "best people," as in Italy and Germany, can already be found in jail. He says much less about these people, what they are like and what they are doing, than about the sheriffs and vigilantes and combinations of capital and ignorance that obstruct them. Rorty estimates in despair that the "best people" constitute no more than 5 per cent of our population, but this only means that he is impatient. He forgets that five years ago this 5 per cent was probably one one-hundredth per cent, and that it grows in geometric proportion, particularly when it becomes active. He knows, for example, how swiftly one intelligently led union in Minneapolis made labor history and materially strengthened the anti-fascist forces in the entire country.

Beyond question Rorty tells many truths necessary for us to know; the disproportion in his estimates, corresponding perhaps to his own quick irritation and a touch of panic, is the only serious weakness in his book. It is noticeable that he found the bulk of his material in the lower middle-class and the lowest unskilled proletariat. By themselves these groups justify his view of the United States as in a state of degenerating chaos, with a drift toward fascism. One must draw the same conclusion if one looks longest and hardest at the farms and small towns, with the now quaint idea that they are the key to the United States. Intellectually Rorty knows that they are not, but he is betrayed by his emotions, as is indicated in the tone and many subjective details of his book, almost into agreement with Sinclair Lewis fiction. Rorty, however, is much too honest to subscribe to Lewis's sentimental rescue of America from fascism via the farm and village. His book, therefore, is much more seriously worth your time than anything Sinclair Lewis has done for years, including his latest novel. James Rorty is real, if not so easy to take.

ANITA BRENNER

A Life Well Lost

The Exile. By Pearl S. Buck. Reynal and Hitchcock. $2.50.

THERE would appear to be a discrepancy between the manner of any book by Mrs. Buck and the things it is saying. Her style, which by this time has become a habit she cannot be imagined without, is so entirely unaccented, so thin and fluid, so consciously free from the customary devices for achieving climax, so skilfully and artificially relaxed, as to indicate a content of minor and indeed trivial importance. Such, however, is notoriously not the case. Her books deal exclusively with the major human events: birth, education, courtship, marriage, work, death, love, compassion, and extreme cruelty. "The Good Earth" was successful among other reasons because it reminded novel readers that such things are of greater interest than the catchword of the moment or the manners of last month. Another reason perhaps was that the experiences of Wang and his people seemed never to be mitigated; their suffering was intense, their relief from suffering was likewise, and the catastrophes were such as only a wise and able writer can keep from being intolerably painful.

The present volume, a biography of Mrs. Buck's mother, is crowded in the same way with rich and radical matter. Its heroine was born in Virginia of a Dutch father and a French mother; was infected with missionary zeal and went as the young wife of a mystical and impractical prig to spend most of her days in the filthiest country on earth; bore seven children of whom four died dreadfully; had all the worst diseases herself, including tuberculosis and cholera; was moved, until she decided to ignore her husband's "calls," up and down and across the perilous vast rivers of China; endured dozens of those fetid summers in which no Occidental ever learns how to live; was several times in danger of her life because she was a "foreign devil"; nursed thousands of miserable people and saw hundreds die of starvation outside the walls of her house; returned every nine years to an America whose clean and fragrant memory was for her a temptation to commit the mortal sin of wanting to stay where she belonged; and went back each time—the last time to die slowly and be buried ten thousand miles away from the mountains she loved with an inexpressible devotion. Inexpressible, that is, unless her singing at the organ expressed it to her children, and unless the stories she was always telling them of their grandparents and of the clean hills at home gave them notions of America which no mere American is permitted to have. For in addition to the terrible material which makes up the body of this book, there is the idyl of a nineteenth-century America such as no man or woman ever saw with actual eyes; in addition to it, and playing against it, like the second of two powerful themes.

Enough has been said to indicate that "The Exile" says a great deal. Here, nevertheless, is the immemorial and rather watery style of "The Good Earth" and "A House Divided." How reconcile the matter and the manner? How justify the manner? I am not sure that it can be done, or could at any rate be done in another case. In Mrs. Buck's case I am disposed to agree with the general judgment that she had better be taken as we find her. Since she is so good a writer the secret is a real secret, and her very own; though it can be observed in passing that her style must have an accent to which the reader's attention is never called, and though it may be admitted that a very fine kind of selection is always in process, along with the most delicate arrangement of details, so that the biggest ones become the barest and so that the right ones remain longest in the memory. Nor should I neglect to remark that a number of the most brilliant details in this volume have to do with its American portion; Hermanus with his elegant white collars and the small French wife who will not let her son be taken away by Southern soldiers are persons impossible to forget.

Mrs. Buck restrains herself most of the time from passing judgment either upon the barbarous institution of missions or upon the exasperating blindness of her father, who never saw what kind of woman wasted her life in his service. It is perhaps rash to say wasted, in view of the fact that magnificent human beings of her kind are seldom used by circumstance as we should like to see them used, and in view of the poor knowledge we have at best concerning the purpose of anybody's existence. Yet in one passage Mrs. Buck does break out:

> Strange remote soul of a man that could pierce into the very heavens and discern God with such certainty and never see the proud and lonely creature at his side! To him she was only a woman. Since those days when I saw all her nature dimmed I have hated Saint Paul with all my heart and so must all true women hate him, I think, because of what he has done in the past to women like Carie, proud, free-born women, yet damned by their very womanhood. I rejoice for her sake that his power is gone in these new days.

If she had not broken out we should have known well enough how she felt, but I am glad she was unable to suppress her bitterness, and perhaps it would have been impossible for her to do so in any case. For her impulse to write this book must have been an irresistible desire to rescue Carie from oblivion, and the desire must have been bitter at the same time that it was strong. Here anyhow is one woman picked out of ten thousand; her life justified by a record of her good works; and her existence rendered meaningful if only by the accident that a surviving daughter happened to be gifted with the potency of words.

MARK VAN DOREN

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The Fascist Knight in Shining Armor

The Coming American Fascism. By Lawrence Dennis. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

THIS reviewer has never met or heard Lawrence Dennis, but he is certain that the author of "The Coming American Fascism" is a charming and agreeable person. How could one fail to fall under the spell of an individual who is always the Christian knight: so affable and courteous toward his foes, so charitably disposed toward the weak, so bold and lion-hearted when the demons of ignorance and privilege are to be met and routed? And when such a knight has the extraordinary capacity for self-delusion to be found in Mr. Dennis—when the first victim of his persuasive logic is himself so completely—it is doubly difficult to resist him.

About one hundred years ago, in England, there appeared a somewhat similarly bemused young man who—perhaps more than Mr. Dennis—was confronted by the necessity for creating a career for himself. His name was Benjamin Disraeli, and he too, as a youth, was a knight in shining armor; but because of the accident of his birth he could not very well call himself a Christian knight. So his knightliness—he insisted upon its superiority—was of the Saracen variety. Disraeli resembled Mr. Dennis in many ways. He was very skilful verbally. He was quite learned. He also talked of service. The particular ogre he was getting a party together to hunt down was the young and lusty British industrialism; Mr. Dennis's ogre is the same industrialism, now in the form of finance capitalism grown aged and vile. And beneath the slightly ridiculous romantic exterior which Disraeli affected, there functioned the brain of a person who was as keenly appreciative of the main chance as anybody in shoe leather. Disraeli sought to rally to his banner the high-born youth of England in a crusade against the factory system, the destruction of rural England, and the money changers. This program he called Popular Toryism; but although he loudly professed it, he was not above understanding that the support not so much of the young men as of their land-owning and stock-jobbing fathers was necessary for the realization of his political ambitions. In the same way Mr. Dennis calls to his side America's young élite, while the weekly journal which he edits openly defers to the Elder Statesmen of the Republican Party.

When Benjamin Disraeli came into power, he sold out young England to British industrial and finance capitalism. He made India and Egypt safe for the ten-percenters and gave the textile and steel lords a new lease on life. We do not have to conjecture what Mr. Dennis and his friends would do if they were to come into power. His long theoretical discussions of the roles of the state, private enterprise, finance, the family, and foreign affairs under fascism really are of no significance except as indicating the character of his own intelligent progress. Fascism lives and breathes not in Mr. Dennis's fair pages but in the "coordinated" labor movements, the gigantic armies, and the concentration camps of Germany and Italy.

The reader is asked to remember, says the jacket of this book, quoting from the author's first chapter, "that Italian Fascism and German Nazism are not primarily the subjects of discussion." Indeed, they are never discussed, but their ugly shadows lie across every page Mr. Dennis has written. All his talk is brave and sweetly reasonable. Could there be a fairer description of a lower-middle-class paradise than the following?

> Under fascism, private property, private enterprise, and private choice in the market have no rights as ends in themselves. They have different measures of social usefulness subject to proper public control. If these institutions and ways are to have social utility to the state, the liberal regime must be ended, the great monopolies nationalized, and all the economic processes subjected to the discipline of a national plan. The ultimate objective is welfare through a strong national state, and neither the dictatorship of the proletariat nor the supremacy of private rights under any given set of rules.

There are many minor curiosities in this book, as well. In one place Mr. Dennis speaks of his "faith in the vitality of American democracy and individualism"; in another, of "honest socialism"; in still another, of fascism "as a formula for order and abundance." The author hotly denies that fascism is anti-intellectual or anti-Semitic. Can it be that Mr. Dennis, after all, is only another Gottfried Feder, destined after the successful fascist "revolution" to end his days as a petty pen-pusher in some minor functionary's office? I don't think so; for this book closes on a sinister note.

> If [says Mr. Dennis] liberal capitalism is doomed, we must expect its successor to be largely the work of angry and frustrated men with a will to power. Preparatory thinking, nevertheless, can bring into alliance with these men the less frustrated and embittered and bring to the new movement their contributions. Only a body of enlightened and sympathetic opinion will be able to impose on an emergent fascism counsels of moderation and avert the extremes of a bitter class war.

Mr. Dennis is threatening the armed gangsterism which made possible the successes of Hitler and Mussolini. Who fed and drilled the fascist gangs and furnished them with their pretty little daggers in Germany and Italy we now know; and what forces today dominate the council tables and barrack rooms of fascist Germany and Italy we also know. In a recent interview with a New York *Times* correspondent Hitler admitted that there was no such thing as a Nazi economics. He was not telling the whole truth, of course. Nazi economics is finance-capitalist economics; and all of Mr. Dennis's fancy rhetoric to the contrary notwithstanding, it is becoming increasingly difficult to persuade Americans that this is not so.

LOUIS M. HACKER

On Keeping Out of War

Can We Be Neutral? By Allen W. Dulles and Hamilton Fish Armstrong. Harper and Brothers. $1.50.

Neutrality: Its History, Economics and Law. Volume I: *The Origins.* By Philip C. Jessup and Francis Deák. Columbia University Press. $3.75.

ON August 29, 1790, Thomas Jefferson wrote: "It is expected that the flames of war will be kindled between our two neighbors [England and France]. Since it is so decreed, we have only to pray that their soldiers may eat a great deal." Later, in connection with threatened war between Russia and Turkey, he observed that "the life of the feeder is better than the life of the fighter. . . . Let us milk the cow while the Russian holds her by the horns and the Turk by the tail."

This same seeker after peace-with-profits learned later that his country could have peace *or* profits in a general European conflagration, but not both. In the embargo of 1808 he sacrificed profits to peace and failed. Madison sacrificed peace to profits and lost both. Wilson kept both during a precarious neutrality and then discovered, as had his predecessors, that it was too late to choose. The neutral that insists on "milking the cow" must fight when the warring dairymen kick over the milk pails.

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This elementary truth has at last permeated the American public mind and created the dangerous illusion that the cure of war lies simply in limiting trade with belligerents or refusing to protect such trade. In a fine frenzy of determination Congress and the Administration have abandoned "freedom of the seas" and resurrected a qualified version of Jefferson's embargo. But such are the ways of Washington statesmanship that the cure promises to be worse than the disease.

These two volumes are indispensable to anyone who would see the problem of American neutrality as a whole. The scholarly work of Professors Jessup and Deák is the first instalment of a series of four volumes. The authors have succeeded brilliantly in the difficult task of presenting the development of the international law of neutrality from the Middle Ages to the end of the eighteenth century. This "law," as it relates to neutral trading rights, they properly describe as a "highly artificial and unreal body of illogical compromises." They show conclusively that the "acknowledged rights" and "immutable principles" in the name of which America paradoxically fought in 1798, 1812, and 1917 to protect its trading privileges as a neutral have always been mere rationalizations of decisions dictated by calculations of profits and power.

Americans are not again likely to be persuaded to sacrifice life and treasure for the sake of such "principles." They have, in intention at least, abandoned diplomatic and military protection of opportunities to make "blood money." The how and why of this startling reversal of policy are admirably presented in "Can We Be Neutral?" Messrs. Armstrong and Dulles have written for the Council on Foreign Relations what is unquestionably the most lucid and comprehensive analysis of the present dilemma of American foreign policy. The text is a primer of neutrality, followed by fourteen appendices of invaluable documents and statistics. The most important conclusion which emerges from this presentation is that a mandatory embargo on American exports to belligerents, leaving the President no discretion as to the time, scope, and incidence of application, will wreck American economy in a general war abroad, tend to make the world safe for aggression, and prove in practice as unworkable as Jefferson's unhappy experiment. While the authors do not urge a mandatory policy of discrimination based upon the Kellogg pact, they concede the desirability of a distinction between aggressors, victims of aggression, and sanctionist countries seeking to restrain aggression. They would leave the President free to consult with the other signatories of the pact and, where he thought discrimination warranted, to seek authorization from Congress to apply the embargo—whether on arms alone or on other goods—only against the nation violating the pact.

In short, it is here demonstrated that the only feasible policy is one of refusing public protection to war traders—*Caveat mercator*—and of permitting the Executive to decide in particular conflicts what prohibitions shall be imposed on such traders in the interests of peace. Such was the policy urged by the Administration last summer and now abandoned in the face of Congressional pressure. Finally the authors point out that all neutrality policies are mere palliatives: "The only sure way for the United States to escape entanglement in foreign wars is for there to be no wars. . . . No neutrality legislation can give us the advantages of an isolation which does not in fact exist. . . . The duty to help prevent wars is not primarily one which the United States owes to other nations. It is a duty which we owe to ourselves."

These conclusions will be accepted by almost all observers who have made a logical analysis of the problem. But it is painfully evident that logic is no more likely to play a part in pending decisions than it did in earlier decisions to enforce neutral rights. In the one case the result was to plunge America into war. In the other case, the result may be to wreck League

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sanctions, foster autarchy and war abroad, make the United States an economic ally of fascist imperialism, and bring the country to the brink of conflict with all the League powers. The pending legislation, incredibly supported by certain isolationist "liberals," is one part lunacy, one part stupidity, and one part criminal ignorance of diplomatic and economic realities. Peace is to be had only at a price which American isolationists have hitherto been unwilling to pay. That price is not the abandonment of American foreign markets after war has broken out. It is American cooperation with the League of Nations in rendering war everywhere so costly and dangerous to the aggressors that it will become an impossibility.

FREDERICK L. SCHUMAN

Recorded Memory

Innocent Summer. By Frances Frost. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

HOW far the matter of perspective influences the quality of writing about children for adult readers is well shown in Miss Frost's first novel. Actually, children in fiction as in life fit into categories no more and no less than any other persons, places, or things; but writers' attitudes toward their child subjects do tend to classify themselves. A child, for instance, can be regarded by his author as a Lilliputian, in which case he may be treated as father to the man, one of the little people in a world differing only in degree from the adult world, or he can be seen as a member of a primitive race dwelling forever strange and apart, differing from men in kind as well as in degree. Children of the first sort are miniatures of their elders—Dickens, Mrs. Burnett, and Hugh Walpole have told their stories; the others show no such parallel, their path is unpredictable—they are the children of "The Innocent Voyage" and "Les Enfants Terribles," who live in alien but poetic isolation.

Miss Frost's children are of the first order, distinctly and purposefully of recognizable heritage and environment: Paul, the kindly, sensitive, too generous son of a drunken farmer; Fern, the happy-go-lucky daughter of the carefree village appraiser; suspicious, fearful Mart, whose drunken, lecherous father drives the town hack; tomboy Dorothy, the grocer's child; Don with weak lungs; and illegitimate Sam, adolescent and ambitious. In their brief summer they mark their own time and reflect the life of the village around them, gaining from June to October an introduction to the inevitable experiences of death, love, human cruelty and pettiness, understanding and fear. The merit of the book is its accuracy in recapturing the nature of the children's reactions. The vernacular used is right to the point of being the very essence of their thoughts and moods. Observation ranges from the young leaves of the maple that turn red too soon, to the copper wire holding the toilet paper together. The thoughts of youth are the long, long thoughts flecked by the first stirrings of hope and despair, the uncontrollable tortures of adolescence, the impulses that lead to climbing trees or to a spanking or a whaling with a leather strap.

It is all as familar as oneself and as vivid as yesterday. There is nothing unexpected except what the reader has momentarily forgotten. The pleasure of memory awakened without nostalgia or enchantment is in this book, for about its truth there is no doubt. For some readers the satisfaction of identity and the discovery of a well-known pattern fully repeated is enough. A stricter standard, however, demands that if a novel is to be called good, it must contain elements subtler than truth, that quicken not only memory but feeling and imagination.

FLORENCE CODMAN

A Great Architect

The Architecture of H. H. Richardson and His Times. By Henry Russell Hitchcock, Jr. New York: The Museum of Modern Art. $6.

THIS book is a complete and carefully documented study of Richardson the artist. For Richardson the man Mrs. Van Rensselaer's book is still the best source; for his place in the general stream of American architecture Lewis Mumford's "Brown Decades" is still indispensable—and both of these facts are explicitly and graciously stated in the preface. Thus this book is a study of creative artistic development, and of this development in a specific period of American culture. The influences that Richardson must have felt—the Harvard environment and the important new Harvard buildings of those years, Paris and the Ecole des Beaux Arts of the early sixties, the buildings of Théodore Labrouste upon which Richardson worked, and the incoherent but vividly alive architecture of post-Civil War America—are set down here with wide scholarship and painstaking research. It is all seen as an integral part of Richardson's career, clarifying alike the uncertainties of his earlier work and his essential greatness in rising above these influences—as few of his contemporaries could have risen—to the heights of artistic achievement reached in the Marshall Field store. The book is a detailed study of a great romantic by a scholarly critic in thorough sympathy with his subject's own romanticism.

It is precisely the detailed and romantic character of the criticism which leads at times to a false emphasis on architectural details—that is, on the precise character of Richardson's carved ornament. In Richardson's case particularly, the derivative sources—whether Gothic, pre-Raphaelite, Romanesque, or Byzantine—are always secondary to the important fact that, whatever the sources, Richardson's superb sense of material changed the forms into something new and fresh. And in the work of any architect details of ornament are merely modes of expressing a conception embracing an entire building, to be judged only incidentally for themselves and primarily in their relation to the whole.

In style, too, the book suffers from this over-archaeological point of view. It frequently sounds like the shop talk of learned specialists. It is full of names of styles and periods, not clearly defined, which must be puzzling to the general reader. Who but a student of architecture, for instance, knows off-hand the difference between the neo-Grec and the Greek revival? Or between the Gothic revival and the Victorian Gothic? A few paragraphs to define these terms might, it seems to this reviewer, have been more valuable than some of the long descriptions of projects, which are better explained by the plans and photographs shown. Like specialists' shop talk, too, the book uses its own extremely personal type of colloquial—almost too colloquial—English, at times brilliant, at times merely careless. It varies from sentences as obscure as "Indeed, the very fact that in Paris the art of the Middle Ages was a sort of not too secret vice led him to consider the Romanesque he was using as a personal vehicle of expression," to such terse and really epigrammatic summations as "The twentieth-century windows, correct conventional exercises in French High Medieval design, serve only to show that the more we know about medieval art the less we are able to equal it." Or "The exaggerated pursuit of asymmetry in architecture is a sign of youth, quite as out of place in the work of a mature genius as its exaggerated avoidance."

There are a few minor historical inaccuracies. The mansard roof was popular in New York at an earlier date than Mr. Hitchcock seems to think; Detlef Lienau—who had worked

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in Paris under both Henri Labrouste and Cendrier between 1842 and 1847—used it on almost all his early New York and Newport houses from 1849 on. The architects of the old New York Equitable Building were Gilman and Kendall; Post was associated, but his function was structural only. Gilman also seems to have been the chief creator of the original design for the New York State Capitol, though Fuller was appointed the architect; and Gilman was at least as much responsible for the eclectic "French Renaissance" public buildings as Mullet.

Moreover, Richardson's originality and rationalism were not so unique as they first appear. Robert Dale Owen's "Hints on Public Architecture" (1848) is primarily rationalistic, and only secondarily a plea for any style. The earlier work of McKim, Mead, and White, to its first culmination in the Boston Library, evidences a pursuit of originality on a rationalist basis. Enthusiasm for the genius of Richardson need not lead, as sometimes it seems to do in Mr. Hitchcock's book, to a belittling of the real achievements of his predecessors and contemporaries.

Yet, after all, these are secondary matters. Here at last, in Mr. Hitchcock's pages and in the not-too-well-reproduced plates of Richardson's work, is a study of an artist in "Victorian" America the like of which we have not seen before. Here we have a real monument, not only to Richardson, but to American architecture itself—to its importance and its promise. It is a monument massive, dignified, buttressed with scholarship, and founded on meticulous research; like all good monuments it should direct a new and a more understanding attention on Richardson himself and on the development of American architecture.

TALBOT HAMLIN

The Romantic Feeling

One Season Shattered. By James Daly. The Centaur Press. $2.

WHEN so many of our poets are showing the imprint of Eliot's technique, imagery, and philosophy, it is a relief to read a book of lyrics illustrative of an original creative imagination. James Daly's poems are purely his own, and they are good. They are not, to be sure, always perfect in craftsmanship. Working as he does with subtle and irregular rhythms, giving form to impressions which, rooted in reality, reach, cone-shaped, toward a mystic wonder, Daly frequently fails to point his emotional experience with sufficient sharpness. His language combines startling and good imagery with the older literary language of mystic rapture.

The lyrics of his first group, obviously personal poems, are the best. In the latter part of his book Daly writes about the maladjustment of our times in poems which might be called "class-conscious," and these are much less successful. Daly's own milieu is the world of romantic feeling; his poetry is a kind of impressionism arising from the subconscious mind and its curious associations. The emotion which stirs him most frequently is love. Even though, as in much modern poetry, this poet's mind denies his emotional persuasions, the sense of wonder before love and beauty nevertheless prevails in him. Yet he can write a good reflective lyric, too. This brief poem is spoken, supposedly, by the poet's father:

> Suppose, lad, in the end you too should know
> The ordeal: courage that has not won victory?
> See your heart's proud city razed; and know
> The destroyer was in some fierce way yourself,
> An inward flaw, destruction in your soul?
>
> Your city must not fall! But if it should,
> What's courage for, if not to understand
> Being anvil rather than hammer of the hand?

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JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH says

Boy Meets Girl. Cort Theater. Rough and ready satire on Hollywood, but probably the funniest thing of its kind since "Once in a Lifetime."

Dead End. Belasco Theater. A play about gangsters in the making on an East River waterfront. More a good show than a great drama, but a very good show indeed.

Ethan Frome. National Theater. The apparently impossible task of dramatization of Edith Wharton's novel achieved with conspicious success. Outstanding performances by Pauline Lord, Ruth Gordon and Raymond Massey.

Jumbo. Hippodrome. Paul Whiteman, Jimmy Durante, and a remarkable clown named A. Robbins surrounded by acrobats and animals. Literally better than a circus.

Let Freedom Ring. Civic Repertory Theater. A second chance for this drama of a strike in a Southern mill. I found it hard going, but it has been highly praised.

Libel. Henry Miller Theater. Exciting English court-room play. Surprisingly probable for this sort of thing and superbly acted.

Mid-West. Booth Theater. Homely and slightly sentimental picture of the joys and more particularly the sorrows of the farmer. Best when it isn't editorializing.

Paradise Lost. Longacre Theater. Clifford Odets' complicated picture of a family composed exclusively of pathological futilitarians. He calls it a picture of the middle class but it strikes me as somewhat less than typical.

Pride and Prejudice. Plymouth Theater. Amazingly successful adaption, brilliantly staged and acted. It gave me more pleasure than any other play of the season.

Victoria Regina. Broadhurst Theater. Delightful series of scenes from Laurence Housman's drama stunningly acted by Helen Hayes and others. Fairer to the matron queen than Strachey but funny nevertheless and charming besides.

Winterset. Martin Beck Theater. Maxwell Anderson's surprisingly successful attempt to write a poetic play on a modern theme. Bold, original, and engrossing.

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More characteristic are the cycle which deals with the whole romantic experience of love, loss, and memory, and such a poem as The Tracks Led Nowhere, which closes

> Flight it was, of course: flight and hiding
> But the tracks led nowhere, you never found
> Her refuge. This was the mystery.
> And so you are careful now of all your syllables
> And no one could think your hand unsteady.

On finishing the book one feels that James Daly is a poet who is slowly developing a greater precision and beauty of phrase and a very much surer grasp of form. "One Season Shattered" is a much better book than "The Guilty Sun," which preceded it. Daly's mind, obsessed by mystery and sometimes terrified at its own discoveries, is an interesting mind. If he clears his work of the too easy phrase, the too literary image, he will be an authentic artist.

EDA LOU WALTON

Introduction to the Dance

Dance. By Lincoln Kirstein. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $5.

MR. KIRSTEIN has written a very enthusiastic and lively book in "Dance," subtitled "A Short History of Theatrical Dancing." He starts with ancient Egypt and ends with Balanchine and the school of the American Ballet, touching briefly in his progress on Greek tragedy, the Roman theater, early Christianity, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and numerous other topics down to Mary Wigman and Massine. Included are a chronological list of important events in the history of the dance, an index, a good bibliography, a list of recordings of music for theatrical dancing, and a large collection of pictures with good explanatory notes. The pictures, as Mr. Kirstein himself remarks, are the best part. But the book as a whole will prove useful both as an introduction to the subject and as propaganda for the dance.

Dancing is of course a very difficult thing to write about. Little is known about dancing before the Renaissance, when forms were invented which persist in some shape or other down to our own day; one cannot, for example, find out enough about Greek dancing to stage the choruses in Greek tragedy with any approach to historical accuracy. There is no generally accepted system of notation for dance steps or even choreography, as there is for music. Ballet has developed an exact technique and a technical jargon to go with it; but lists of *pirouettes, glissades, pas de deux,* and *entrechats* make dreary reading for the uninitiated. They describe mechanics of movement or traditional figures, and leave out the subtle elements of action, mood, and style which are the life of any theatrical presentation. The historian of the dance is thus driven back to memoirs, to pictures, to descriptions, to impressions and conjectures, to anecdotes about ballerinas—to everything but the dance itself. This is not Mr. Kirstein's fault; and he has on the whole steered very successfully between impressionism and atmosphere on one side and lists of dance steps on the other.

The least satisfactory part of the book is the first hundred or so pages, from Osiris to the Renaissance—a kind of preface as he says to the main theme of theatrical dancing proper. For all this period our knowledge of actual dancing is extremely sketchy, and Mr. Kirstein is reduced to showing the place of dance, its part in religious festivals, in tragedy, in spectacles, popular merrymaking, and comedy. This leads him inevitably to a short account of Greek tragedy, to summarizing the differences between the civilizations of Greece and Rome, and to telling us what death meant to the man of the Middle Ages—to the writing of "outlines," in short. Now there is much to be said both for and against the contemporary genre of the outline. An outline may serve a useful function as an introduction to a new field, as stimulus to discussion in a field which is already familiar, or as propaganda and publicity, as, for example, Oliver Sayler's books on Reinhardt and the Moscow Art Theater. The chief danger in outlines is that they may dispose of historic forms, periods, or forces which might nourish our own time. Thus one would never guess from Mr. Kirstein's account of Greek tragedy that this form had found a new and genuine, if rather cerebral, life in "Murder in the Cathedral"; a sensational but suggestive life in Cocteau's translations of "Antigone" and "Oedipus"; and a poetic, if not dramatic, reincarnation in Mr. Yeats's two plays about Oedipus—all in the space of one generation. One may take another example from his chapter on the Middle Ages: he quotes a paragraph from H. O. Taylor on medieval symbolism but does not mention the fourfold method, the foundation of the "Divine Comedy," the guide of Eliot and probably of Joyce. These are criticisms such as are always to be made of outlines. Yet Mr. Kirstein's book would have gained in authority if he had managed to stick closer to the dance itself, and been more wary of that deadly device, the scholarly generalization.

When Mr. Kirstein reaches the beginnings of ballet he is on firmer ground. The last part of his book, though marred by an overfondness for adjectives and an inadequate grasp of abstract words, gives an intelligible account of the development of modern dancing. He has accumulated a valuable collection of contemporary material, unpublished as well as published, and is indebted to two pages and a half of friends, helpers, publishers, and so on. The upshot of it all is, of course, a strong defense of ballet, both as *the* theatrical dance of Western civilization and as a form capable of infinite growth and development. Mr. Kirstein recognizes the contributions of Duncan, Laban, and Wigman, but believes that they can all be absorbed by ballet. He makes an excellent plea for dramatic content in the dance; indeed, his whole book may be read as a demonstration of the fact that dance, like poetry, has nearly always had content with meanings beyond the aesthetic, until the rise of the modern specter of pure art. The American Ballet as well as the exponents of modern dance should take this to heart.

FRANCIS FERGUSSON

Shorter Notices

The Last Civilian. By Ernst Glaeser. Robert M. McBride and Company. $2.50.

Like Ernst Glaeser's fine first novel, "Class of 1902," "The Last Civilian" endeavors to show the effects on a small community of an event of national importance. This time not war but fascism is the issue. But whereas in "Class of 1902" the catastrophe was depicted mainly in terms of its relation to the hero, a sensitive growing boy, in "The Last Civilian" no such simplification has been attempted, and the menace of fascism loses much of its weight when distributed evenly among a number of people with whom the reader is allowed little more than a nodding acquaintance. Much of the chaos of his subject, moreover, seems to have penetrated to the author's treatment of it: for all its sincerity "The Last Civilian" is a drifting, haphazard piece of work, covering much ground but getting nowhere. Nor does Glaeser's genuine indignation serve to resolve it: he plainly hates Nazism but he seems singularly uninformed as to its real nature, and the only alternatives to it which he is able to offer are exile, a return to the soil, or suicide—surely Hitler's defenders never had so triumphant an argument! And it is difficult to feel any sympathy for the three rather sentimentalized characters who choose these various means of escape and whose opposition to the movement is thus reduced to a cowardly and meaningless form of sub-

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jectivism. Against so brutally concise a program as that launched by the leaders of the Third Reich, Herr Glaeser's kind of antagonism can end only in vague yearnings, empty denunciations, and a novel which is weak, badly constructed, and hopelessly confused.

Mark Twain. The Man and His Work. By Edward Wagenknecht. Yale University Press. $3.

Mr. Wagenknecht's account of Mark Twain is the best-balanced one to date, but it is not the most interesting. Passion is as desirable in criticism as it is in the writing called creative; indeed, it must be there before we have anything approaching either truth or greatness. Mr. Wagenknecht seems to be perfectly free from prejudice, and the industry with which he has read everything about his subject is remarkable, even admirable. The result, however, is a work of reference rather than a piece of criticism. It does not appear that Mr. Wagenknecht believes Mark Twain to have been any particular kind of man. Yet he was clearly some kind of man, and those who have made the attempt to say so, even when they have perverted the simple truth, have honored it as this humorless and unimaginative volume never does.

Drama

Call It an Evening

"CALL IT A DAY" was brought from England and should run a year. Ostensibly a "slice of life" (cut where the raisins are thickest), it is actually about as artificial as a play can well be, but it is blessed with the priceless gift of universal appeal, and only the veriest Scrooges of criticism will succeed in concealing their delight. Simpler souls may take it for a miracle of realism—which it isn't—but even those not unaware of the wheels going round will join in the laughter and applause, for "Call It a Day" is, to an extraordinary degree, neat and witty, lively and gay.

The general plan of the piece is much like the plan of "Dinner at Eight" and doubtless derives, more remotely still, from "Grand Hotel." To my mind, however, it is a much better play than either of these, partly, at least because the tone is much lighter and because the audience is not asked to take the artificial pattern with anything like the same seriousness. The two earlier plays aspired toward tragedy and actually got as far as very portentous melodrama. One had to take them very seriously or not take them at all. But "Call It a Day" stays pretty consistently on the level of comedy and imposes upon its brittle structure no greater emotional weight than that structure is capable of bearing.

We begin with the rising of a middle-class English family on the first dangerous day of spring. The scene shifts to the kitchen, where the new waitress is discovering the charms of a neighborhood butler at the same time that the dog has discovered the charms of the butler's bull, and the play then permits us to follow the various members of the family as they meet the various crises which the season provokes. But when midnight reunites them at last, we learn that nothing very serious has happened to anyone. The daughter—through no fault of her own—was *not* seduced by the philandering painter; the husband did *not* push beyond the limits of a mere indiscretion the flirtation with his actress client; the wife did *not* carry any farther than a faithful wife may be reasonably permitted her little adventure with her friend's brother; and the son was saved, by the opportune appearance of a girl over a garden wall, from planning that Easter hike with a suspiciously intense young

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man. All is for the best in this best of respectable families, and if the more romantically inclined spectators feel the least bit cheated, they may take comfort in imagining for themselves what happened to the dog—whose adventures were either forgotten by the author or deliberately left veiled in a decent obscurity. Besides, it is clearly stated that the cat next door is going to have kittens.

Obviously the success of a play like this depends in considerable measure upon the success of the author in keeping his audience amused by a continuous succession of minor incidents immediately recognizable as veracious by anyone who has ever been part of a family, and upon his success in making the surface so unmistakably real that one accepts without too much question the artificiality of the arrangement. But granted that these conditions have been met as completely and as gaily as they have in this piece, then there is nothing surprising in the fact that it should afford a simple but genuine delight to almost any spectator, since it accomplishes in the simplest of manners something which art always strives to accomplish—it imposes, that is to say, a recognizable pattern upon the disorder of life.

The plan, I said before, suggests "Dinner at Eight" and "Grand Hotel." But there is no real reason for stopping there. It also suggests "Street Scene," "Pippa Passes," and, to stretch a point, "The Lower Depths." And obvious as it is, there is no simpler method of creating the pleasant delusion that even ordinary life is characterized by that neat balance and round completeness which we so much wish it had. Such a play of everyday existence has much the same relation to everyday existence itself that dancing has to walking. It substitutes for our plodding gait the unnatural grace and measured rhythm of a ballet.

Tyrone Guthrie has staged a well-paced production for the Theater Guild amid settings by Lee Simonson, and the whole is very pleasantly acted with Gladys Cooper and Philip Merivale in the leads. Glenn Anders is also excellent, especially in the scene where he is painting the portrait while, for the benefit of the love-sick sitter, he discourses casually of more beautiful models whom he has used in the past. But I am not sure that the acting honors ought not to go to thirteen-year-old Jeanne Dante, as the schoolgirl who has just acquired all the language of maturity without knowing very precisely what it is intended to convey.

"Lady Precious Stream" (Booth Theater) is a comedy written in the ancient Chinese manner and produced with some comic emphasis on the very visible property men and the other conventions of the Chinese theater. It was originally produced in London, and ostensibly Mr. S. I. Hsiung, the author, is entertaining the audience by inviting them to smile tolerantly at the quaint tale and the quaint staging. Unless, however, I am very much mistaken, he is a great deal slyer than appears upon the surface and is laughing at his audience quite as much as it is laughing at his play. In traditional Chinese fashion, the hero leaves his wife for eighteen years while he is away on a military expedition, but the Princess of the Western Regions who follows him back and who can be disposed of only by being handed over to the Minister of Foreign Affairs ("Affairs" in quotes) very strongly suggests an English lady. Bewildered by the etiquette of the Chinese court and contemptuous of the reserve with which the husband greets the wife, she is much impressed by the hand-kissing Foreign Minister. But when, at the last, the reunited pair exit with the remark, "Our affection is for our mutual delight and not for public entertainment," Mr. Hsiung is quite obviously giving the last word to that civilization at which he has been helping the Londoners to smile. As Precious Stream, the faithful wife, Helen Chandler is very agreeable, if not conspicuously Chinese, and the whole thing is quite charming.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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Films

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IN 1929 a hundred million Americans went weekly to the movies. Only seventy million go now, what with hard times and—so the pious think—the determination of a great and good people to show Hollywood that obscenity doesn't pay. Wrong or right, the pious have been busy of late with the morals of the silver screen; and if two or three chapters in a recent book* are any indication, they have made their usual mess of it. The book is a symposium on "Screen Entertainment Past and Present," and the variety of its views is greater than one might have expected; so great, indeed, as to provide a number of excellent answers to the wolves within its very fold. By wolves I mean censors—such men, for example, as the Bishop of Los Angeles and San Diego, who makes the remarkable statement that "one hour spent in the darkness of a cinema palace, intent on the unfolding of a wrong kind of story, can and frequently does nullify years of careful training on the part of the church, the school, the home." This seems to me a very damaging statement about the church, the school, and the home; nor does Bishop Cantwell appear to understand the significance of certain sordid figures he adduces on another page, tending to prove that "clean, wholesome" films have paid better than "dirty" and "oversexed" ones. Nor does Representative Cannon of Wisconsin, who in 1934 introduced a bill for national censorship of movies, give even a passing thought to the grave moral danger of his plan to make the movies "show" this, "encourage the thought" of that, and "give an impression" concerning certain "right values." Deliberate dishonesty, I imagine, would destroy everything. The only qualified censor of the cinema or of any other art is its audience; in the present instance that audience is millions of people, and they had better be trusted to decide what is good for them. Abundant evidence that they can do so is supplied in other chapters of the book, notably those by Edward G. Robinson, Don Marquis, and Judge Ben Lindsey, who, to be sure, do not so much present the evidence of statistics as let in the eager air of human sense. They so effectively dispose of the Bishop and the Congressman that when the time comes on page 131 for Seymour Stern to dismiss all censors as "perennial pests" the dismissal seems quite as adequate as it is brief.

Mr. Stern has, however, his own pedantries, chief of which is the conviction that no movie is worth mentioning as art unless it represents a technical advance over all previous movies. A corollary is that there have been no movies worth mentioning since D. W. Griffith was in his prime—since, in fact, "Intolerance." This is not equivalent to damning the English drama since 1600 because it has failed to produce another "Hamlet"; it is equivalent rather to lamenting the fact that "Hamlet" is still effective in a theater which should have turned itself inside out several times during three centuries of technical revolution. All that Mr. Stern will admit in favor of the current cinema is its excellence as "popular entertainment catering to an inevitably shallow vein of sentiment."

It is popular, of course, as it should and must be, and as the Elizabethan theater was in a degree nowhere equaled until the days of Griffith. It is estimated that 30,000 out of 100,000 Londoners went weekly to see plays in Shakespeare's time, and this circumstance may have had much to do with the quality of what they saw. My own hope for the cinema is that it

*"The Movies on Trial." Compiled and Edited by William J. Perlman, The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

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remains popular. I have respect for Mr. Stern's learning and for his powers of critical analysis, but I hear with a touch of horror that he wants to start Film Universities and organize Little Cinema Groups. The daily and weekly critics for whom he has so much contempt because they persist in noting microscopic differences between one technically undistinguished film and another are actually up the proper tree. Most of them shake nothing down except the rotten fruit of their rhetoric, yet there they are where they can see the pictures—as entertainment, or, as Don Marquis puts it, as story. And it remains possible that a few of them will begin to talk about the things that matter: the conduct of a narrative, the simplification and illumination of a theme, the use of imagination in transitions from one locality or one episode to another—in short, the things which make the best movies as exciting as they are.

Excitement is good for the soul, and I freely confess that that is what I look for among the picture houses of New York. I haven't the least objection to such popular devices as the recognition scene; they are the profoundest also, as Euripides and Shakespeare perfectly knew. And I seriously doubt that Mr. Stern uses the word "shallow" with discretion. The other night I tracked down "The 39 Steps" to Canal Street after having missed it all winter in the warmer and more fragrant theaters. If such a film is shallow I find I do not mind; it is what any film should be and what the best of them have always been regardless of date or fashion: simple, clear, swift, and very exciting. I cannot say as much for "Charlie Chan's Secret" (Roxy) or "Ceiling Zero" (Strand). And "Itto" (Cinéma de Paris), the French film taken in Morocco under the direction of Jean Benoit-Levy and Marie Epstein, celebrated for the theory which stood them in such good stead in "La Maternelle," merely proves that a theory had better be understood before it is applied. The theory is that there should be no conscious acting in a film, and indeed no actors. It worked for the children of Montmartre, but it does not work for men and women. Even the adults of Morocco need to know what they are doing before we can become absorbed in what they do.

MARK VAN DOREN

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